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The Bull and the Red Van:

**Pakistani-heritage young people in a small city explore the influences
upon their educational progress**

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The Bull and the Red Van: Pakistani-heritage young people in a small city explore the influences upon their educational progress.

ABSTRACT

This study is about the influences underlying the inequalities in educational progress experienced by Pakistani-heritage pupils in the small city of 'Newminster'. The literature offers a wealth of explanations for the persistent inequalities in attainment among different minority-ethnic groups, from which the voices of the pupils themselves are almost entirely absent. In this study, young people offer their own, often competing, explanations of distinctive aspects within the GCSE attainment data, including their rapid progress over the previous decade and the small gap in attainment between those eligible for free school meals and their peers. The principal sources of data are extended discussions with groups of Pakistani-heritage young people supplemented by interviews with parents, and a formal survey conducted by the young people among their black and minority ethnic peers. In analysing the variety of data generated by this mixed approach, the study draws upon the analytical framework of Bourdieu, in particular, the concept of 'habitus'. The study engages with the methodological dilemmas of a white researcher conducting research with a community to which she is an 'invited outsider', and the broader challenges of attempting 'participatory' research. The findings indicate that the Pakistani-heritage young people in the study have a strong sense of habitus that they contend has a positive influence on their educational progress. At the same time, they are actively engaged in habitus transformation. This process drives their educational aspirations but involves personal cost, dilemmas and encounters with barriers constructed by the wider education system. Their insights support a call for further consultation with marginalized young people over issues relating to their own educational progress.

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Preface

Terminology

The field of 'race' in education is beset with terms that are used as if they were defined unambiguously, but in fact carry different meanings for different people. A number of such terms are used in this study, and are discussed below in terms of their relevance to the Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster. 'Newminster', like all names of people, places and schools in the study is a pseudonym used to protect the anonymity of the participants. For the same reason, references to the local paper and documents use pseudonyms.

BME is used to indicate people of black and minority ethnic backgrounds, following the practice adopted by the young people in their survey, and in the literature by Archer and Francis (2007).

Community is used in the sense implied by the particular speaker or the context. Where possible the term is qualified, for example 'Pakistani community', although this usage is still ambiguous, as discussed in Chapter 1.

Co-researcher is used in the sense of Fielding (2004) to describe young people who became researchers in their own right, collecting data from their peers and assisting in the analysis and interpretation of that data.

Culture is used here in the ethnographic sense as 'a group's programme for survival in, and adaptation to, its environment' (Bullivant, 1993) because this is the meaning generally inferred from the participants. However, as the study draws upon Bourdieu's analytical framework, it is noted that he associates 'cultural capital' with the possession of a 'cultured' way of speech, artefacts, such as paintings, and educational qualifications (Bourdieu, 1983).

Ethnicity is a social construct widely used in Racial Equality literature, school records, surveys, and this study. It lacks the biological connotations, formerly and erroneously, attached to the term 'race', and it allows the person to construct his/her own designation.

‘The crucial issue here is not whether members actually do have a common ancestry, but that they believe that they do, and share common memories and on that basis claim a common identity’ (Pilkington, 2003, p.18).

Pakistani-heritage is a designation of ethnicity used by the Local Authority in Newminster after consultation with community representatives (Ethnic Minorities consultant, 19-7-10), and is used in the study out of respect for their wishes. However, the term ‘Pakistani’ is used when participants in the discussion or the survey describe their own ethnicity in this way. It is also used in relation to statistical data where parents have selected the term from a list of categories on a school census form.

Peer researcher is used to denote two of my own peers, Muslim friends and colleagues, who are themselves engaged in postgraduate research of a cross-cultural nature. Their role in this study was to advise and comment on my results and interpretations from a cultural and religious perspective. One of them also acted as a peer reviewer of my writing.

Pupil : Many schools and colleges now denote all those who attend them as ‘students’ or ‘learners’, irrespective of age or level of study. For clarity, in this study it is helpful to make a distinction between ‘pupils’ who are in primary or secondary education, and ‘students’ who are in Further or Higher Education. The mixed group of participants who were in different phases at the time of the study are designated ‘young people’.

Muslim/British Muslim: The term ‘Muslim’ or ‘British Muslim’ is used to describe someone who follows the religion of Islam, either from birth or as a ‘revert’ from another faith. It is acknowledged that in contemporary usage it has a problematic dimension when used as a political or hostile label such as ‘Muslim terrorist’ (Gilleat-Ray, 2010). In this study, I have tried to follow participants’, or writers’, own usage. Some difficulties arise with the overlap between ‘British Muslim’ and ‘Pakistani’ as a self-selected designation of ethnic identity. All the participants in the study describe themselves as Muslim, and in the survey all but one of the respondents who gave their ethnicity as ‘Pakistani’ also gave their

religion as Islam. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that the large majority of Pakistani-heritage pupils in the study are also Muslims. The converse, of course, is not the case as Islam is a world-wide religion and there are Muslims in Newminster who have migrated from areas including Eastern Europe, Uganda, Afghanistan, Iraq, Kurdistan, and Somalia. It is acknowledged that this overlap can lead to some ambiguity in the discussion when, for instance, a number of survey respondents state their ethnicity as 'British Muslim'.

First/second/third generation: The ordinal nature of these terms suggests a precision that, in Newminster, does not apply. The 'first generation' members of the Pakistani community are interpreted to be those who were born in Pakistan and who migrated to Newminster. However, their children, born in Newminster, customarily married a member of the extended family from Pakistan, thus strengthening the community in Newminster. The Pakistani-heritage pupils in the study are typically the children of such marriages, making the term 'third generation' ambiguous (confirmed by Hameeda, 9-12-10).

First language/second language: 'English is now half of our first language' (Shahzad, 5-1-11). The ambiguity in Shahzad's statement reflects the discussion of marriage practices above. Most of the participants were bilingual from an early age, hearing Mirpuri/Punjabi spoken at home by the parent and grandparents born in Pakistan, but being introduced to English by the UK-born parent to prepare them for the language of school. In the survey, when asked 'What do you consider to be your main language?' 68% of the Pakistani-heritage respondents replied 'English'; 16% replied English *and* Mirpuri, Punjabi, or Urdu; and 16% stated a community language.

Chapter 1

Introduction

A young Pakistani-heritage pupil of mine proudly told me:

‘In Pakistan, my family, we have a Bull and a Red Van.’ (Haris Ikram, 7-3-11)

His grandfather and uncle, ‘back home’ in rural Mirpur, understood the value of employing the traditional power of the bull whilst engaging the driving force of the red van to bring new horizons within their reach. Back home in Newminster, my young pupil now has thousands of Muslim brothers and sisters, aunties and uncles, with whom he shares an ‘elsewhere in time and space’ (Rogaly and Qureshi, 2013). In this study, I have tried to listen to some of his peers as they explain how they draw from the power of their tradition and simultaneously engage with the new opportunities open to them to make progress through their secondary education. We have wrestled, severally and corporately, with data from their Pakistani-heritage peers across the city, which both inform and challenge their discussion. I have drawn upon the analytical framework offered by Bourdieu to make sense of the rich variety of data. In particular, the concept of ‘habitus’ is understood as a set of internal dispositions, acquired in the family and the community and modified by subsequent experiences (discussed more fully in Chapter 3). I have loosely identified the ‘Bull’ of embodied culture with the concept of ‘habitus’ and the ‘Red Van’ with the means of habitus transformation.

Setting

‘Newminster’ is a city with a population of under 200,000 (2011 census data), of whom 25% are aged under 19. Traditionally, most employment was in engineering and manufacturing, but, with their decline, jobs moved to the service sector. Until recently, employment levels have been relatively high, but mainly in low skill, low-wage occupations. 35% of households have a household income under £20,000 (Newminster

City Council 2009 data). The city has been a destination for inward migrants since the Second World War. Polish, Italian and Ukrainian workers came first, followed in the 1960s by African Caribbean immigrants to work on the railway and in hospitals. Workers found central, rentable, Victorian and Edwardian terraced housing in the 'Beechton' area.

The Pakistani communities forming the focus of this study arrived during the 1960s from Mirpur in Azad Kashmir. The construction of the Mangla dam in 1961 - 67 destroyed 250 villages in the Mirpur region, and many displaced families used the government compensation scheme to fund their passage to the UK (Masood, 2011). Along with other New Commonwealth citizens, the UK government welcomed them to fill labour shortages but locally they often faced racial hostility. The Beechton area became a predominantly Pakistani, Sunni Muslim community over the next three decades, as ageing White residents moved out and the African Caribbean community dispersed. The Pakistani families maintained strong links with their rural communities 'back home' (a phrase used frequently by participants) (Akhtar, 2003), especially through marriage to family members from Pakistan, who then established new homes in Newminster. The 2001 Census recorded the average household income in Beechton as less than half the Newminster average, with over 45% of residents having no educational qualifications. The unemployment level in 2009 was double the city average.

Whilst people of Pakistani heritage still form the city's largest minority ethnic group, inward migration has continued over the last four decades. In the 1970s, many Ugandan Asians, mostly urban Shi'a Muslims fleeing from Idi Amin, came to the city. A small, active Indian community also came as economic migrants, mainly professional Hindus. Since 2000, and the subsequent accessions to the EU, economic migrants from Portugal, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Romania have arrived, as well as refugees and asylum

seekers from Iraq, Afghanistan, Kurdistan and Somalia. Over 40% of pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and over 100 languages are spoken in Newminster primary schools (Local Authority Pupil Level Annual Census (PLASC) data). In recent literature the term 'super-diversity' (Vertovec, 2007) has been applied to the city.

Meanwhile, the Beechton area itself has become more diverse, and the Pakistani community more dispersed. Though still attending mosque in Beechton, some second generation families have moved to areas of better housing. Beechton's two primary schools, once serving almost exclusively Pakistani heritage pupils when the young people in the study attended them, now also have many pupils from Eastern Europe.

To refer to 'the Pakistani community' is somewhat misleading. Although the majority speaks of Mirpur as 'back home', there are some from other regions of Pakistan. Although the participants in this study frequently refer to '*the community*', this term is often used for the Muslim community, at some times to the Beechton neighbourhood, and at other times to the wider 'Ummah' of all Muslims. In Newminster this includes Sunni, Shi'a and Sufi traditions. In the Beechton area, there are four large Sunni mosques, but each represents a different tradition. There are also two smaller Sufi masjids. All sponsor madrassahs, part time mosque schools offering Qur'anic studies and Arabic lessons, well-attended by children from the age of 5 upwards.

The Local Authority area now (2013) contains 12 secondary schools including 7 Academies and one Free School. A major reorganisation of education took place during the period when the participants in the study were at secondary school, leading to the closure of four former comprehensives deemed to be 'failing' and the opening of a new 'City Academy', Eastminster, and Northminster school which has recently converted to

Academy status. Most of the Pakistani-heritage pupils attend Eastminster or Northminster Academies, or Westminster High which remains a community school. There is also a small single-sex Muslim faith school, the Noor Academy, opened in 2009 and attended by some of the participants in the study. In terms of educational attainment the city sits almost at the bottom of the primary and secondary league tables (McErlain, 2013). This position is blamed in the local press and the council chamber on 'immigration' (Seymour, 2013), a blanket term which usually encompasses the 'new Commonwealth' workers of the 60s and 70s and their British-born children and grandchildren, along with recent economic migrants from Europe.

The researcher

The immediate mismatch of a white researcher studying a Pakistani community demands that the researcher should locate herself in relation to the participants in the study (Archer, 2002, Merriam et al, 2001). I am white British, state-educated to postgraduate level, female, and Christian, placing me as an 'outsider' in several dimensions (Hellawell, 2006). However, there are varied and complex ways (Troyna, 1998) in which my world intersects with those of the participants. My age (in my fifties) confers assumed knowledge and respectability so that men in the community do not lose status by engaging with me, although it distances me from the young participants. In one early meeting (Parenting conference 18-4-10), I was 'placed', literally, as an 'honorary man', creating a number of ethical dilemmas.

Professionally, I have taught for 15 years in multi racial state secondary schools, and subsequently in Further and Higher Education at Newminster College, which is attended by most of the Pakistani students who remain in education post-16. Two years before the start of the study I was made redundant, a levelling experience in many power

relationships. I now work part time in teacher training at another local college, and for the Newminster Racial Equality Council (REC). In the overlap between these roles I have been involved in running an introductory teacher training course for Imams and madrassah teachers, and Ofsted preparation for the Noor Academy. During the study I was invited by the four main mosques to act as coordinator – an ‘outsider within’ (Mirza, 1998) – for a project to run English and Maths support classes at the madrassahs. I work with colleagues from the mosques on several inter-faith groups, and represent the REC on the Local Authority Admissions Forum. Thus, I claim to experience both ‘empathy’ and ‘alienation’ (Hellowell, 2006) with the participants. However, the focus of the study is on the Pakistani-heritage pupils, and I am neither of Pakistani heritage, nor a pupil, which raises methodological issues throughout the study.

The research question

As part of my work for the REC, I was asked to analyse the local authority GCSE attainment data by ethnicity, and this came up with some quite surprising results, in relation to Pakistani heritage pupils (Chart 1).

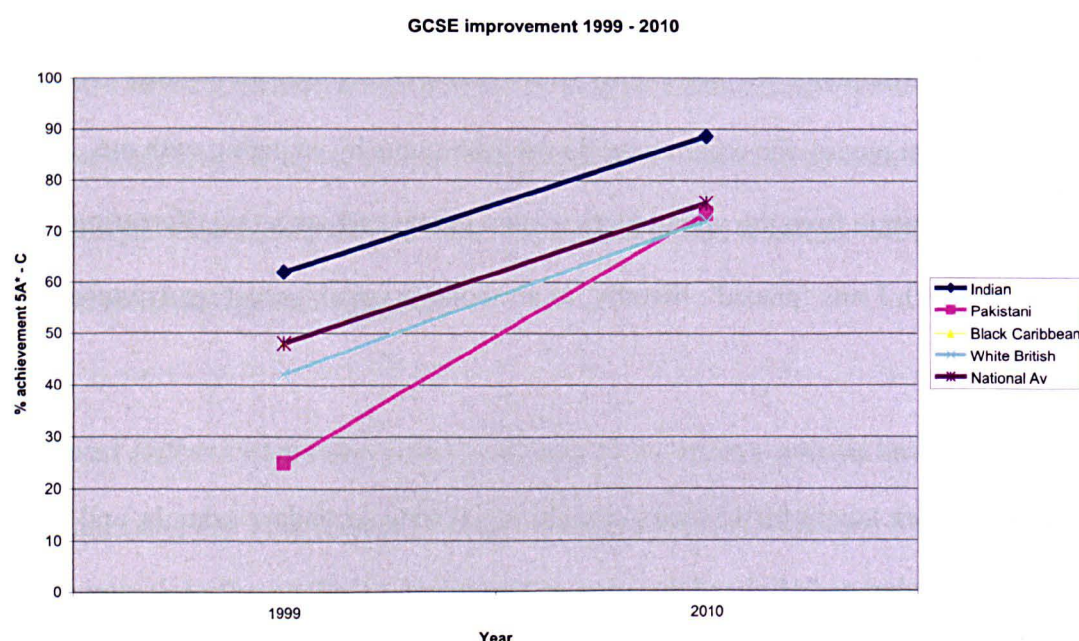


Chart 1: GCSE improvement 1999- 2010 using Local Authority data

The analysis showed that over the last 10 years the Pakistani-heritage cohort had made faster progress than all others. In three out of the last five years they out-performed all other groups apart from the (relatively small) Indian cohort. There is a wealth of literature on ethnic minority attainment nationally over the last 20 years or so, but, generalising, there is a fairly consistent pattern where Indian and Chinese pupils outperform White British, and African Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils achieve less well (Archer and Francis, 2007). Over the last decade there has been much government discourse about ‘narrowing the gaps’ (DfE, 2010d), but, as Gillborn (2008a) points out, ‘Gap Talk’ can give the impression that the ‘problem’ has been ‘solved’ and divert attention and resources away from the inequalities and forms of racism that persist. There has also been more focus recently on the effects of socio-economic deprivation, which is now understood to be a more important factor in school attainment, and resulting attention to the ‘problems’ of white working-class boys (Gillborn, 2010c). So, I compared the data on Pakistani heritage pupils on Free School Meals (FSM) with those for White British pupils, and came up with another surprise (Chart 2).

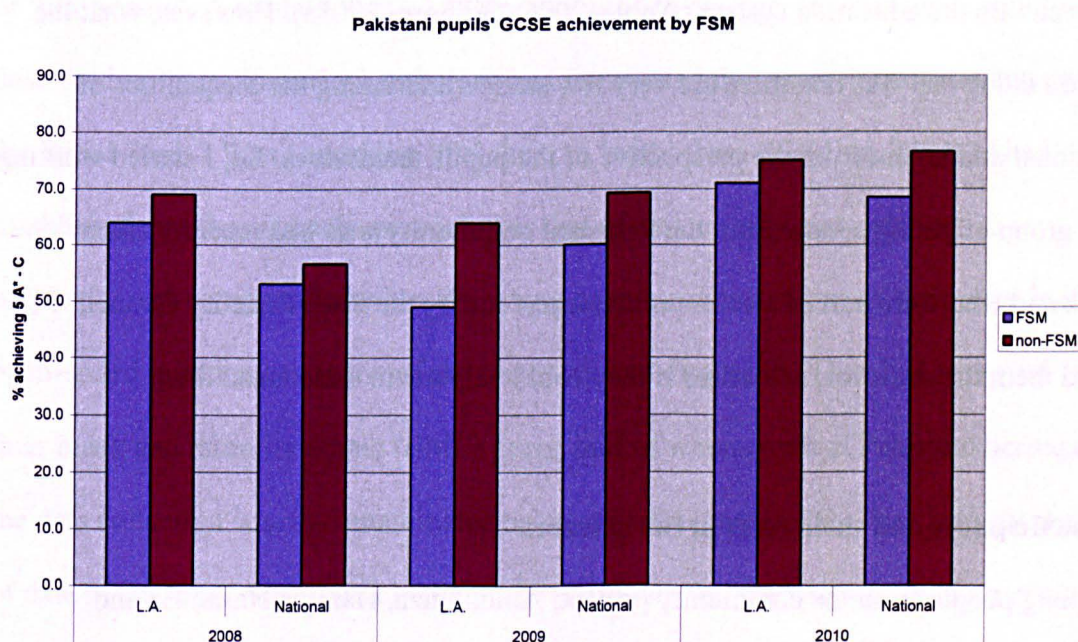


Chart 2: Pakistani-heritage pupils' GCSE achievement by FSM using Local Authority data and DfE (2010a)

The Pakistani-heritage pupils eligible for FSM had achieved almost as well as their non-FSM peers. They had also achieved significantly better than White British pupils on FSM both locally and nationally.

So, the first research question was formulated: What factors have led to these outcomes for the Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster?

Up to this point, all the data, and analysis, were statistical, well within my 'comfort zone' as I am a mathematician by training, and still teach maths. The attempt to understand the statistical outcomes took the research, and the researcher, into very different territory. The literature on the educational inequalities experienced by minority-ethnic groups in the UK offers an array of competing explanations (Stevens, 2007), considered in Chapter 2. Some authors focus on the impact of home, culture and religion (for example Abbas, 2002a); some on school effectiveness (Demie and McLean, 2007); and others on racial injustices structured into the education system (Apple, 2006; Gillborn, 2008a). However, what the literature did reveal was that there are very few studies addressing the inequalities of educational attainment from the perspective of the pupils themselves. So, I started working with a group of young people from the Pakistani community who had recently taken GCSEs and who were part of a community project run by the Race Equality Council. I showed them the statistics, and asked if they could help me to understand them.

The participants and their roles in the research

The young people from the community project; Abid, Faiza, Haniya, Haris, Isa and Shahzad, became the key participants in the research. They were surprised by the statistical data and offered their own explanations of the findings, often contesting among

themselves. After the Initial Study, pupils from the Noor Academy were also engaged in discussion of the findings. Throughout the study, a unique role is played by my 'peer researchers', Hameeda and Zahid. Both are involved in their own academic studies of a cross-cultural field and we agreed to meet regularly to discuss contextual interpretation and provide critical commentary. Hameeda is a member of the Pakistani-heritage community who grew up and was educated in Newminster, now herself a mother and teacher. Zahid is an Egyptian scholar, now resident in Newminster and working as Imam and madrassah teacher at one of the mosques serving the Pakistani-heritage community. They are introduced in more detail in Chapter 3. Other perspectives were contributed by parents; Adeela, Ayesha, Safeen and a parent/teacher Sofia, all of whom are colleagues and friends of mine through work with the REC, the College or the Noor Academy. My work on the madrassah project led to the involvement of Thayer, a student co-worker on the project, and Abdul, Jamal and Qasim, themselves pupils at the madrassah.

During the Initial Study, these participants could all have been described as 'interviewees' or 'informants'. A methodological dilemma started to emerge. In what sense could they be described as 'participants' when I alone had formulated the research question and designed the Initial Study? Was I speaking 'for' them or 'with' them (Fielding, 2004)? I had established that the research approach was that of a case study, not a survey, so my perplexity was compounded when the young people conducted one of their own, including open-ended questions on many of the issues we had discussed. They had surveyed 165 of their black and minority ethnic (BME) peers, half of whom were of Pakistani heritage, so the data collection was uncontaminated by an old white researcher. They brought their gift of data to me for analysis, anticipating (correctly) that the process was too time-consuming to fit into their busy lives. Thus, they became 'co-researchers' (Fielding, 2004) but the question 'How far is this research participatory?' remains, and is discussed in chapter 3.

I attempted some participatory data analysis (Nind, 2011) with the young people, and pupils from Noor Academy who had themselves been respondents in the survey, explaining and interpreting their peers' responses to me. The analysis progressed haltingly using a 'grounded theory' approach, letting the themes emerge from the data through a process of coding, comparison, and re-coding (Glaser and Strauss, 1999). The analytical tools provided by Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1983; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Grenfell and James, 1998; Grenfell, 2007) provided a helpful framework for this process and are introduced in Chapter 3. The voices of the young people form the primary data, but interwoven with data from the survey that reinforces or contradicts what they say.

Table 1 Table of participants – summary of roles

Participants	Role in discussions	Role in survey	Role in analysis
Young people from REC community project	Discussion of attainment data, school experiences and home culture	Collection of survey data	Some coding for comparison. Interpretation of results from survey
Thayer	ditto		
Madrassah pupils	ditto		
Parents	ditto		
Noor Academy pupils	ditto	Respondents in survey	Interpretation of results from survey
Peer researchers Hameeda, Zahid	Discussion of all data and explanation of cultural context		Review and criticism of my analysis and interpretation

The final methodological quandary for a participatory study with a broadly critical stance is whether it can be described as 'emancipatory' (Mirza, 1995). I cannot make that claim. The concept that my research can 'emancipate', or 'empower', or 'give voice' to others is patronising and conflicts with the participatory ethos of the study. It is written in the hope that it will provide useful evidence for the participants as they confront the barriers that continue to impact upon their progress in education. They must decide whether it does.

Chapter 2

The context of the study in literature

This chapter reviews the literature relating to the educational progress of minority ethnic pupils in the UK, with particular reference to those of Pakistani heritage. The first section charts the monitoring of national minority ethnic attainment data over the last 25 years and the development of contesting explanations of the inequalities revealed. Some of the significant movements in educational policy over the same period are outlined, set alongside a discussion of whether such policies serve to reduce, or reproduce inequality.

The second section outlines related studies of the ‘culture’ and home lives of Asian, Muslim and Pakistani-heritage young people and how these factors shape their experiences of schooling. Any study of ‘home culture’ poses a danger of reproducing stereotypes or rehearsing ‘cultural pathology’ – the implication that ‘something is inherently inferior in the familial and cultural background of those from minority ethnic groups’ (Shain, 2003, p.2). This danger is reinforced by accounts of the changing perceptions of Asian youth, and British Muslims in particular, following the events of 9/11. The risk of pathologizing the participants is acknowledged here, as it is throughout the Newminster study. Several authors make the point that cultural stereotypes of Asian pupils are often intertwined with issues of gender. Whilst the Newminster study does not include gender as a specific focus, relevant literature on the intersecting inequalities of ‘race’ and gender is considered.

As a result of considering the existing literature, the case is argued for the voices of minority ethnic young people themselves to be heard at the centre of the debate on inequalities in educational attainment.

The development of monitoring minority-ethnic achievement

This section places the Newminster study in the context of national data and research.

Racial inequalities in education became the subject of national concern in the 1970s, against a background of public and political unease over immigration (Tomlinson, 2008). The 1976 Race Relations Act included a section on education for the first time and in 1979 the Rampton Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups was established (Pilkington, 2003). The Committee of Enquiry's final report, the Swann Report (Swann, 1985), 'optimistically described the role of education in laying the foundations of a 'genuinely pluralist society'' (Tomlinson, 2008, p.84). It called for further research into the achievement of children from ethnic minorities.

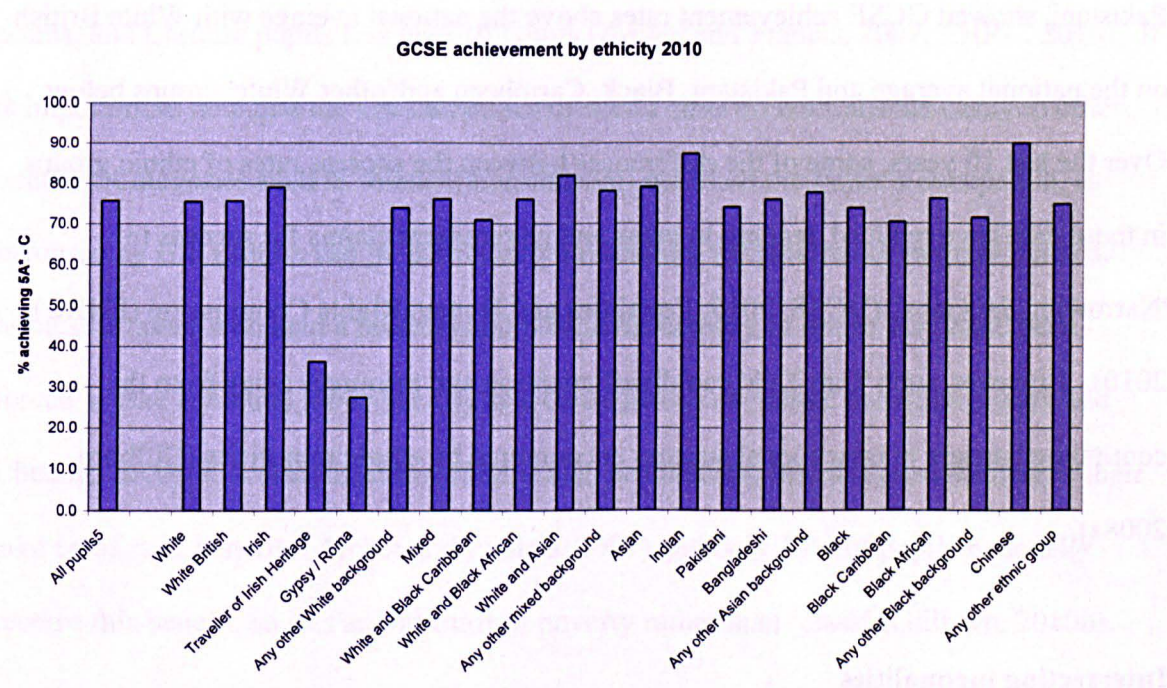
Over the following decade, the National Youth Cohort Study produced data showing a general profile where Indian pupils achieved better results than White British, while Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black pupils consistently performed less well (Pilkington, 2003; Strand, 2007). Subsequently, a major report on educational inequality shows the gap between Pakistani pupils and White British at GCSE widening between 1987 and 1997, and reports a persistent association between class and attainment within each ethnic minority group (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000). The authors caution against creating an ethnic minority 'hierarchy based on assumptions of inherent ability'. (Ibid, p.7)

The presentation of achievement data by ethnicity inevitably contributes to a discourse of 'ability' as a quantity that is measurable and relatively fixed (Hart, 1998). This notion underpins many of the policies discussed in the next section, such as setting by ability and target grades (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). It is perpetuated by a very narrow focus in official statistics on a prescribed quota of GCSE grades at age 16. Studies using different reference points show a different picture. For instance, young people from minority ethnic

groups are more likely to remain in education post 16 and Asians, and Pakistanis in particular, overtake White British students by 19 and at degree level (Modood et al., 1997; Modood, 2004; DCSF, 2007).

In spite of these significant limitations, the establishment of databases showing the relative achievement of pupils in national tests by ethnicity, gender and class has helped to reveal a range of inequalities in outcomes (DfES, 2006; DfE, 2010a). These data sets portray a persistent 'achievement gap' over time and across local authorities in which girls outperform boys, and pupils from lower socio-economic groups underachieve in relation to those from 'middle class' backgrounds. In relation to ethnicity, outcomes for GCSE achievements in 2010 are shown below in Chart 3 (percentage of pupils achieving 5A*-C grades) and Chart 4 (percentage of pupils achieving 5A*-C grades including English and Maths).

Chart3: GCSE achievement by ethnicity 2010 Source DfE, 2010a



GCSE achievement incl Eng & Ma 2010

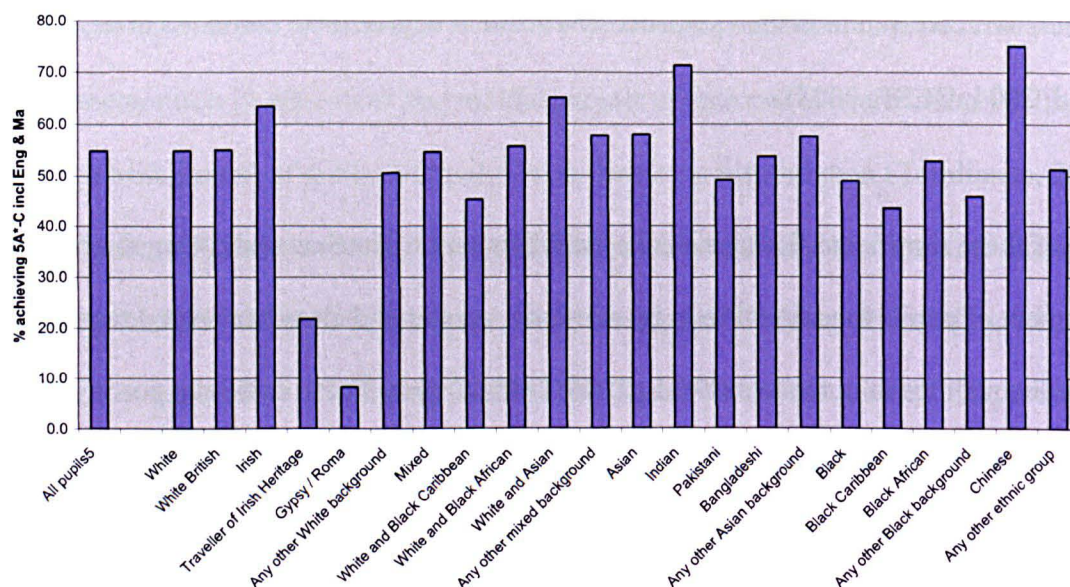


Chart 4 :GCSE achievement including English and Maths 2010 Source: DfE (2010a)

The charts show a range of 65% in success rates between Chinese pupils and Gypsy/Roma (2010 data). Between these extremes, all the 'Asian' and 'mixed Asian' groups, apart from Pakistani, showed GCSE achievement rates above the national average with White British on the national average and Pakistani, Black, Caribbean and 'other White' groups below. Over the last 10 years, some of the differences between the success rates of ethnic groups in these data have reduced, leading to press and government claims for success in 'Narrowing the Gaps'. (DCSF, 2010; Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), 2010). However, such 'Gap Talk' can divert attention and resources away from the continuing barriers to educational success encountered by ethnic minorities (Gillborn, 2008a).

Intersecting inequalities

The presentation above is further complicated by the way in which the characteristics of gender, socio-economic status and ethnicity inter-relate to create a complex web of inequalities. A large bank of contextual data, the Longitudinal Study of Young People in

England (LSYPE), was established in 2004 to inform investigations into the reasons underlying the reported inequalities (Strand, 2007). Sophisticated statistical methods of analysis, based on meta-analysis and multi-level modelling, (Goldstein, 2003) are used to calculate the relative effects of different variables and to provide 'value added' scores as a measure of relative progress between stages of education. Using this body of data and methods, major studies (Strand, 2007, 2008; EHRC, 2010) concur that for the majority of pupils socio-economic status is the most significant determinant of educational attainment. However, White British pupils' performance is much more affected by socio-economic status than that of the other main ethnic groups (Strand, 2007).

Nationally, students eligible for free school meals (FSM) are less than half as likely to achieve 5A*-Cs as non-FSM students (EHRC, 2010). The 'gaps' in achievement between FSM and non-FSM pupils vary significantly between ethnic groups, with White British pupils having the largest gap at over 25 percentage points, Pakistani pupils around 15 points, and Chinese pupils less than 10 points (Archer and Francis, 2007; EHRC, 2010). It is important to note that the UK categories of social class do not translate easily to other cultures. Categories such as 'manual/non-manual' based on the father's occupation, as favoured by Hill (2009), can be particularly misleading for children of migrant parents, because a father who held a professional post in his country of origin may have been forced to take a manual job in the UK as a consequence of 'ethnic penalties' (Heath and Cheung, 2006). The designation of FSM is also problematic because groups differ in their take up of state benefits (Archer and Francis, 2007) and only 13% of pupils nationally receive this benefit, so it is an indicator of poverty rather than 'class' (Gillborn, 2010b).

Even when differences in social class are taken into account, inequalities in attainment between different ethnic groups persist (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000). When controlling for

social class, the attainment gap between Pakistani pupils and White British is reduced but not eliminated (Hamnett et al., 2007). Wilson et al. (2005) and Strand (2008) both suggest that, for some groups, aspirations and attitudes may be more important factors than poverty. Rothon concludes that Pakistani/Bangladeshi groups 'appear to perform at a low level regardless of class' (Rothon, 2008, p.701). Variations in rates of progress are also noted. Minority ethnic groups generally make faster progress than their White British peers (Wilson et al., 2005), in particular between KS3 and KS4 (Haque and Bell, 2001). At KS3, Pakistani pupils are significantly behind White British but by KS4 their mean score at GCSE is almost the same (Strand, 2008). Such variations in progress make it particularly difficult to draw reliable conclusions when controlling for prior attainment (Gillborn, 2010a).

The policy context

The picture presented by the data above is etched against a background of fluctuating education policy. At times policy responds to the evident inequalities; at other times it appears to reproduce them. From 1966 to 1999, the government provided 'Section 11' funding to Local Authorities who needed to make special provisions 'as a consequence of the presence within their area of substantial numbers of immigrants from the Commonwealth whose language and customs differ from those of the community' (Local Government Act 1966, in Tomlinson, 2008). The policy was to promote 'assimilation' through the provision of 'English for Immigrants', and, in some areas, through the controversial dispersal of 'immigrant' children between schools to 'spread the problem' (Pilkington, 2003, p.160). Other authorities and teachers adopted an approach which acknowledged the value of the children's home cultures, and the Swann report (1985) advocated aspects of multicultural education. Section 11 funding was used by some

authorities, including Newminster, to develop multicultural education services providing training and resources for teachers (Shilela, 2013).

The Education Reform Act (1988) heralded a neo-Conservative movement in education, establishing a National Curriculum to ensure that all pupils were taught the 'right' knowledge (Apple, 2006). Multicultural education, of which Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had been extremely sceptical, was marginalized (Tomlinson, 2008). The Act also incorporated neo-liberal philosophies of the free market economy, implemented through an education marketplace where competition and parental 'choice' between schools is used to drive up standards. Choice is informed by rigorous testing of standards in 'Standard Attainment Tests' (SATs) and the publication of league tables of results, established in 1992 (Archer and Francis, 2007; Apple, 2006). In a speech to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the independence of Pakistan and India, the then Prime Minister, John Major, declared that 'Policy must be colour blind – it must just tackle disadvantage faced by British citizens whatever their background' (Major, 1997, p.3). Major also stated that he preferred to describe UK society as 'cosmopolitan' rather than 'multicultural'. Critics saw this shift as signalling the demise of initiatives to promote multicultural education (Gillborn, 2008a) such as those generated by the multicultural education centre in Newminster.

As the young people in the Newminster study were about to start school, the new (Labour) government announced its agenda of 'Education, Education, Education' (Blair, 1996). Educational opportunity was to be the means to combat social inequalities but now allied to the forces of the competitive market (Tomlinson, 2008). The first education White Paper 'Excellence in Schools' (DfEE, 1997) made a commitment to equal opportunities, but

maintained the previous Conservative government's emphasis on standards and national testing (Gillborn, 2008b).

As part of its commitment to addressing inequalities, the new government commissioned a retrospective enquiry into the murder of Black teenager Stephen Lawrence. The resulting report (Macpherson, 1999) defined the concept of 'institutional racism' and brought about a new focus on race relations. The resulting Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) required public institutions, including schools, to undertake impact assessments of policies and to analyse data (such as achievement data) for indications of racial bias. However, subsequently the focus of policy returned to the theme of 'standards' rather than structural issues such as inequalities perpetuated by institutional policies (Shain, 2003; Archer and Francis, 2007).

In Newminster, between 1990 and 1999 the attainment of minority ethnic pupils in the city was monitored by a local multicultural advisory service that made recommendations to local policy makers and practitioners. It sponsored initiatives such as bilingual teaching assistants in the primary schools in the Beechton area, and the progression of local Pakistani-heritage teaching assistants to become qualified teachers, and was awarded a Government Charter Mark in 1997 (Shilela, 2013; Local Government Chronicle, 1997). However, the 'Section 11' funding that had sustained such initiatives was replaced in 1999 by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), which was reduced to 'small-scale' and 'localised' projects (Archer and Francis, 2007, p.16). This funding stream was finally discontinued by the Coalition government in 2012, thus ending almost three decades of ring-fenced funding for minority-ethnic groups (DfE, 2012).

A major initiative of the Labour government to combat educational inequalities was the 'Excellence in Cities' policy, launched in 1999 with the aim of 'improving the attainment of all pupils in disadvantaged urban areas' (Kendall et al., 2005, p.i). Although aimed at *all* pupils, 40% of those involved were from minority-ethnic backgrounds, with Pakistani heritage pupils being the largest group. When the project ended in 2004, the evaluation concluded that Pakistani-heritage pupils attending an 'Excellence in Cities' school had a *reduced* probability of achieving 5A*-C grades compared with pupils of similar backgrounds in other schools (Kendall et al., 2005). The report's authors do not offer any explanation for this surprising outcome. It does, at least, indicate that the same strategies do *not* have the same impact on all ethnic groups. Such findings highlight the need for an 'increase in the complexity of evaluation designs' to match complex contexts (Dyson and Todd, 2010, p.120). Kendall et al. (2005) also report on an attitudinal survey undertaken with the 'Excellence in Cities' cohorts. On a scale where pupils assessed their own behaviour, attitude towards school, and educational aspirations post-16, Pakistani-heritage pupils scored more highly than any other group and 1.7 times more than the White British students. High scores on this scale were associated with higher attainment at GCSE when other factors were controlled.

Several strategies promoted by the New Labour government (1997-2010) and the subsequent Coalition, reflect the ambivalent benefits of 'Excellence in Cities'. Such strategies can be challenged on evidence that they place pupils from some minority ethnic backgrounds at a disadvantage relative to White British pupils. Labour's education policy promoted the wider use of 'setting by ability' within schools (DfES, 2005), a practice followed rigorously by schools such as Eastminster Academy in Newminster, despite an existing body of evidence showing that pupils from minority-ethnic groups were more likely to be placed in lower sets (Ireson and Hallam, 1999) and consequently restricted in

the grades available to them at GCSE (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). The 'Gifted and Talented' programme developed as part of 'Excellence in Cities' resulted in 'those from minority ethnic groups [being] considerably less likely than those from White UK backgrounds to be identified as gifted and talented' (Kendall et al., 2005, p.ii). Such policies, although intended to promote equal opportunities, have in practice furthered what Bourdieu identified as 'social reproduction' (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Of continuing concern is the overriding focus on 'standards', measured by narrowly defined qualification targets. The 'A-C economy' often means that resources are concentrated on those pupils whose performance is predicted to be 'borderline' and where extra inputs can lift them into the target range (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000), while marginalizing the needs, and talents, of others (Apple, 2006). These policies and outcomes lead Gillborn to conclude that:

'The principal beneficiaries of his [Blair's] policies have been White children (the only ethnic group to improve their GCSE performance every year during his reign)' (Gillborn 2008b, p.722).

Such statements are open to criticism on several grounds. First, in the example of setting discussed above, Foster et al. (2000) argue that authors such as Gillborn make a value judgement that prioritizes the interests of one group (in this case pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds) who may be disadvantaged in a setting system, above those of another group who may benefit from being taught in higher sets. A second criticism is of Gillborn's emphasis on 'White supremacy', which is seen as reducing inequalities of outcome by ethnicity to a single issue of black-white dualism (Hill, 2009). This factor is very relevant in the Newminster context, where young people are as likely to identify themselves as 'British Muslims' as they are with a particular designation of ethnicity such as 'Pakistani' (Survey results q6) :

‘The root problem is that contemporary antiracism defines people in terms of their colour; Muslims – suffering all the problems that antiracists identify – hardly ever think of themselves in terms of their colour’ (Modood, 2010, p.28).

Following Blair, the Coalition government announced its education policy with a strong denunciation of educational inequalities:

‘It is unacceptable for educational attainment to be affected by gender, disability, race, social class, or any other factor unrelated to ability... It is a moral failure and an affront against social justice. We must put this right, and it is a determination to do so that drives our vision for reform’ (DfE, 2010b, p.1).

The envisaged improvement is driven by ‘the twin virtues of greater independence and greater accountability’ for schools (Ibid p.11). The 2010 White Paper ‘The Importance of Teaching’ also offers evidence of increased social mobility resulting from greater independence (for Free Schools and Academies such as Eastminster Academy) that is drawn from the Charter School system in some states in the U.S.A. However, Apple cites contrary evidence that Charter Schools have been ‘colonized by the already advantaged’ (Apple, 2006, p.67). The ‘virtue’ of greater accountability is realized through a new inspection framework with a high priority placed on pupils’ achievement, but no requirement for monitoring attainment by ethnicity nor for inspection judgements about the school’s practice of equal opportunities (Ofsted, 2013a). The role of ‘guardians of social justice’ (DfE, 2010b, p.18) is transferred to Local Authorities – the same authorities from whom Free Schools and Academies have been granted greater independence.

Hypothecated funding such as the EMAG has been replaced by a single grant, the ‘Pupil Premium’, allocated to all pupils eligible for FSM (DfE, 2013a), despite evidence that the attainment of pupils from ethnic minorities is significantly less affected by this criterion

than that of their White British peers (Gillborn, 2008a; Archer and Francis, 2007). Such measures offer further evidence of the complexities and ambiguities of policy.

An important component of the new accountability framework is the evaluation of 'school effectiveness'. Ofsted (2005) and Demie and McLean (2007) broadly concur that in an 'effective' school, the strategies affecting the academic outcomes of minority-ethnic pupils include; encouraging parental involvement and teacher awareness of pupils' cultural heritage, monitoring of data, target setting, and targeted support for individual pupils. In the 2010 White Paper, schools are required to place even greater emphasis on monitoring progress through target setting at the individual level (DfE, 2010b). However, 'many so-called 'effective' schools operate in a 'colour-blind' manner which assumes that all students have the same needs and are affected by the same issues' (Blair, 2005, p.59). Pilkington (2003) also questions the concept of overall school 'effectiveness' when addressing the needs of particular minority groups. School performance, as shown in league tables, is significantly influenced by the school's composition in terms of the social and ethnic backgrounds of its pupils, so the government emphasis on school management in so-called 'failing schools' may be misplaced (Hamnett et al., 2007).

Through its emphasis on school improvement and standards, the 2010 White Paper clearly transfers the responsibility for success – and failure – to the school and the individual, removing the need for policymakers to identify and address the structural inequalities embedded by previous policies (Archer and Francis, 2007; Shain, 2003). Great emphasis is laid on the operation of individual 'choice', without acknowledging the evidence that the educational 'choices' of young people are constrained by a complex set of factors (Ball et al, 1999). Moreover, the emphasis on 'competitive individualism' (Fielding, 2004) can

become internalised by pupils and parents. This process can lead to 'misrecognition' of systemic racism (Archer and Francis, 2007):

'Only directing our attention to test scores would cause us to miss some truly profound transformations, many of which we may find disquieting' (Apple, 2001, p.416)

The search for understanding: cultural factors

The picture of significant and persistent differences in educational attainment, presented in the first section, has generated a large body of research seeking to explain and understand it. The discussion above indicates how, 'the debate between competing explanations is deeply political' (Pilkington, 2003, p.135). The accounts in the literature can be broadly grouped into 'structural' and 'cultural' considerations. The 'structural' includes analysis of factors in schools, or the wider marketized education system, that may perpetuate inequalities, as outlined in the previous section. The 'cultural', considered below, explores the factors in the children's home and community lives which 'shape, but do not determine' their experience of schooling. (Shain, 2000, p.43).

The term 'culture' is used here in the ethnographic sense, as 'a group's programme for survival in, and adaptation to, its environment' (Bullivant, 1993) because this is the meaning generally inferred from the participants. However, as several authors cited draw upon Bourdieu's analytical framework, it is noted that he associates 'cultural capital' with the possession of a 'cultured' way of speech, artefacts, such as paintings, and educational qualifications (Bourdieu, 1983).

A focus on cultural factors when investigating educational inequalities has inherent pitfalls. Instead of holding to account the school and the pupil there is a risk of attaching blame to the family and the child (Pilkington, 2003). It can encourage a discourse of 'cultural

pathology' (Shain, 2003), foster racial stereotypes, and reduce the culture of a particular ethnic group to a static, homogenous caricature (Bhatti, 1999). Some of the older literature looks for explanations of the underachievement of minority-ethnic groups in terms of 'deficient' cultural experiences and practices, as discussed by Stevens, (2007) and Pilkington, (2003). Abbas, for instance, concludes that 'the adverse cultural practices within the home coupled with disengagement from the school ... leads to educational underachievement' (Abbas, 2002a, p.310). Some writers report that lack of familiarity with English language and customs presented obstacles for parents educated outside the UK, limiting their ability to help with homework or engage with the school system (Bhatti, 1999).

A useful theoretical framework is offered by aspects of the work of Ogbu and Putnam. Although both write in the context of ethnic minority groups in the United States, with very different histories from the Pakistani heritage pupils in Newminster, some of their concepts relate well to this group. Ogbu describes two sets of factors influencing the performance of ethnic minority pupils – 'the system' (societal and school-based factors) and 'community forces'. He defines the latter as 'the product of sociocultural adaptation, located within the minority community' (Ogbu and Simons, 1998). He highlights the need to understand the history of how minority groups have integrated with their host society, and how their response to that history colours their attitude to school experiences. For Putnam (2000), social capital is accumulated by three processes – 'bonding', which holds a group together; 'bridging', where connections are formed with other groups; and 'linking' with people in positions of power and influence. The concept of 'ethnic capital' as an asset is offered by Modood (2004) and developed by Shah et al. (2010) in relation to the success of Pakistani-heritage students in gaining entry to Higher Education. Empirical studies provide examples of 'ethnic capital' at work in the educational progress of Pakistani-

heritage pupils. Pupils' strong positive attitudes to learning, and high expectations of parents are identified as significant factors affecting school progress. (Strand, 2007, 2008; Abbas, 2002a, 2003; Ghuman, 2002). Ghuman suggests that these factors can be undermined by teacher perceptions of such aspirations as unrealistic and by the higher level of unemployment of South Asians at 16. Asians are proportionately over-represented in higher education within the 18-24 age group, even though they are more likely than their peers to come from a lower socio-economic class (Modood, 2004). Modood suggests an explanation based on the high value ascribed to education by parents as a means of social mobility for their children, and the supportive family structure that reinforces and transmits these values.

A number of studies examine the specific influence of religious faith and madrassah attendance for young Muslims (including the large majority of Pakistani pupils). Gregory and Williams (2000) portray a view of the beneficial role of madrassahs and community classes in developing literacy skills. They show how techniques used in Qur'anic classes are blended by the children with strategies for teaching reading they experience in mainstream school. The Bangladeshi women in their study highlight 'competitiveness', a 'structured approach' and 'being pushed to get ahead' as key features of the teaching approach in Bengali classes, in an unlikely parallel with the modern discourse of 'effective schools'. Further evidence is presented showing how the discipline of the madrassah environment supports children's appropriate behaviour and attitudes to learning in school (Williams and Gregory, 2001). In contrast, Strand (2007) finds from the large-scale LSYPE that attendance at madrassah classes more than once per week is associated with a negative impact on attainment. He suggests that this may be due to the reduced time available for completing homework. In a Birmingham study of a Mirpuri community with a similar history to the Pakistani-heritage community in Newminster, the influence of

religion was found to be very important for the majority of those surveyed, but the perceived impact of this on their education was varied (Abbas, 2002, 2003).

Similarly, for a study of the young Muslims of Newminster, educated during the first decade of the 21st-century, it is important to consider not only the personal influence of religion but also the impact of the changing political and media response to Islam.

'With the rise of Islamophobia, there is a quiet reaction amongst Muslim youth' (Bhatti, 2006, p.143).

Following riots in Bradford in 2001, Asian youth, and particularly those of the Mirpuri-Pakistani-heritage communities in Bradford and in Newminster, were portrayed 'as the perpetrators of crime rather than victims of racism' (Shain, 2003, p.viii). Politically, the troubles were blamed on self-segregation of the community. Later that year, the events of 9/11 fuelled a view of Muslim young men as the targets of radicalization and potential terrorists (Archer, 2003). Following the London bombings of 2005, the perception of South Asian pupils (mainly Mirpuri-heritage) changes from one of 'well-behaved' students to 'troublesome and threatening', with a perceived gang culture. Muslim pupils are criticised for a failure to mix with others, which is viewed as a consequence of Islamic culture and parental protectiveness towards girls. Both parents and pupils report an increase in racial harassment since 9/11 and the Iraq war, believing that the schools do not take this seriously (Crozier and Davies, 2008). In some cities, including Newminster, there is a growing interest in establishing Muslim faith schools which Bhatti (2006) suggests is a reaction by the Muslim community to institutional attempts to 'absorb and silence' them (Ibid p.140).

Intersecting issues of race and gender.

Many of the perspectives illustrated above are gendered as well as racialized. Muslim boys are viewed as potential terrorists while girls are 'othered' as oppressed and compliant. It is acknowledged that:

'Discourses of 'culture' and 'minority-ethnic identity' cannot be understood as divorced from material and discursive practices around gender, sexuality and class' (Archer and Francis, 2007, pp.37,38).

A number of studies of Muslim young women concur that a high value is placed on education for girls, not only as a means of ensuring personal economic security, but also as a religious obligation. (Abbas, 2003; Basit, 1997; Ijaz and Abbas, 2010; Gilliat-Ray, 2010). Ijaz and Abbas (2010) contrast the 'first generation' parents, who valued education but feared the influence of Western schooling and expected girls to leave at 16, with 'the second generation' parents who encouraged their daughters to pursue Further and Higher Education whilst empowering them to resist corruption. Teachers are shown as unable to distinguish between 'respectful' and 'submissive' behaviour in girls, and interpreting the 'protective' practices of their fathers and brothers as 'oppressive' (Basit, 1997). Shain (2003) portrays the different stances of compliance and resistance assumed by the girls themselves, including the 'Gang Girls' who adopted traditional dress and their mother tongue, in defiance of their teachers, rejecting the image of Asian studiousness. Others rebelled against their parental culture, following the behaviour and fashions of their English friends. Young men, too, may use Islam 'as a resource as part of [the] process of identity formation and youthful rebellion' (Gilliat-Ray, 2010, p.223). The unifying force of faith, brotherhood and Ummah offers a construction that contrasts with 'individualistic white masculinity' (Archer, 2003, p.50). Young men's social space is on the streets, and in cars, whilst the domain of girls is in the home (Gilliat-Ray, 2010).

The Space for Voice(s)

Several of the authors cited in the discussion of cultural factors above reiterate the danger of research itself reinforcing stereotypes of the community under consideration (Bhatti, 1995; Shain, 2003). One strategy for reducing this effect is for the participants to speak for themselves. In the context of research with young people, the importance of their having a voice in matters affecting them is often taken as a given (Lewis, 2001). Their right to express their views and to be 'provided with the opportunity to be heard' is enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Lundy, 2007, p.927). Young people's contributions are also seen to be of intrinsic value (Rudduck and Flutter, 2004; Rudduck and McIntyre, 2007; McCluskey, 2008).

The combination of advocacy and statutory endorsement (DfES, 2004, now archived and 'not to be considered to reflect current policy or guidance') led to the burgeoning of 'student voice' initiatives, such as surveys and student forums, during the first decade of the 21st century (Lundy, 2007; Cruddas, 2007; Rudduck and Flutter, 2004). A number of criticisms can be levelled at such initiatives, and the researcher working with young people must be aware of these and prepared to address them. First, is that the involvement of student voice is merely a response to fashion and may therefore raise unrealistic expectations in the young people (Fielding, 2004). Secondly, the concept of 'student voice' implies a distinction between the adult's voice and the child's voice, the latter being an under-developed form of the former, which arises from a 'form of benevolent paternalism' (Cruddas, 2007, p.482). In an organizational context, the influence of the 'student voice' is very dependent on the management of the individual organization, and is rarely heard in Leadership Teams or governing bodies (Hadfield and Haw, 2001). Worse, the garnering of students' views may be used for 'manipulative incorporation' (Fielding, 2004, p.296) in order to maintain the existing power structures. The latter is a particularly salient criticism

for a study of Pakistani-heritage young people because it would be easy for the views of individuals, given in the context of a small case study, to be taken out of context and used to justify policies that they had never considered.

Speaking 'about', 'for' and 'with'

Whilst the aim of this study is making space for the young people's voices, the authorship necessarily remains with the researcher. Fielding (2004) challenges the researcher to locate her/himself as speaking 'about', speaking 'for', or speaking 'with', her participants. In writing a research account she cannot avoid speaking 'about' them, whilst being aware of the dangers of creating 'others' as objects of study. The knowledge 'about' informants that she generates could, potentially, be used to reinforce structures of social control in the school system (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Speaking 'for' others is also problematic because it reinforces the power of the speaker over those whose interests we claim to represent. Further, our representation of their views will be distorted because the way we understand the world is coloured by our own position within it (Fielding, 2004). It is wise caution that we can only 'speak hesitantly', because 'we lack not only understanding, but the means to understand those whose interests and causes we would represent' (Ibid p.300). Only through the 'dialogic encounters' that Fielding propounds, when researcher and participants jointly engage in enquiry and explanation, can we improve understanding and promote 'conjoint learning' (Ibid p.303).

In my role with the Racial Equality Council and in this study, I cannot avoid speaking 'for' those from minority groups, while acknowledging that this is both an inferior, and transitional, position to that of them speaking for themselves to those in power. Within the existing structures the young people do, at times, need both an agent who negotiates an encounter where their voices may be heard directly, and an advocate who keeps their

themes on the agenda of meetings they cannot attend (Bragg et al., 2009). This position is somewhere near 'speaking for others in supportive ways' and moving towards 'speaking with' in Fielding's (2004) taxonomy (p.301, p.305). It is moderated by only doing so on request, or in consultation – and in the research account by checking what I write with the participants and my peer-researchers.

Many Voices

As well as acknowledging the imbalance of power when speaking 'about' or 'for' others, it is important also to recognise voices as 'partial, multiple and contradictory' within any group of participants (Humphries and Martin, 2000). In the 'student voice' movement, which students represent the voice of their peers? If the authorities address the issues raised by the majority, or the more dominant students, will the needs of minorities be further marginalised (Rudduck and Fielding, 2006)? For the participants in the Newminster study there may be particular tensions through an expectation that they should represent the voice of 'the community'. The concept of 'community' is itself contested, as discussed in Chapter 4, but in discussions for this study it is frequently used with several specific meanings. The Newminster MCRG seeks to represent 'a single unified voice for all Muslims' (Keynote speaker, MCRG AGM, 17-12-11). The Muslim 'Community' includes a range of sects or denominations, and people of diverse ethnic backgrounds. The Pakistani-heritage participants in the study are urged 'to be united by ideas not divided by differences' and to 'preserve your identity as a community' (Masood, book launch, 26-10-11). The existence of strong social capital among participants may increase their 'consummatory' motivation, meaning their motivation to contribute to the research resulting from their obligation to, and identification with, their community (Pedder and McIntyre, 2006). However, their loyalty to the community may also silence any divergent voices. In many of the views expressed by young people in the Newminster study there is

likely to be a degree of self-censorship and compliance with community norms (Zahran, 2011). In common with the learning communities investigated by Humphries and Martin (2000), it is important to be aware of 'the dynamics of subordination within the community itself' (Humphries and Martin, 2000, p.287). In this respect, the confidentiality of the survey may have allowed some respondents to voice opinions which they could not share in discussion. It is also important for the researcher to take account of conflicting voices in her selection of material for inclusion and to resist the tendency to seek consensus (Humphries and Martin, 2000).

Voices less heard

Whilst the case study does not claim, or seek, to broadcast a representative sample of voices, the critical stance of this study requires the amplification of the voices of those who frequently go unheard. Less articulate and lower-attaining pupils are often excluded from consultations when their perspectives would be particularly relevant in addressing underachievement in education (Pedder and McIntyre, 2006; Rudduck and Fielding, 2006). Where access to participants has to be negotiated through 'gatekeepers', those perceived as unreliable or uncommunicative may be silenced by the selection process (Reeves, 2007; Curtis et al., 2004). The mode of communication used, particularly in the recorded group interviews, may exclude those who are reticent or who speak indistinctly (Lewis, 2001). Those for whom English is an additional language may be disadvantaged by interviews conducted in English (Curtis et al., 2004), however, the young participants in the Newminster study had all been born and educated in the UK and spoke English fluently. Some may choose to remain silent and this must be respected (Humphries and Martin, 2000).

Other voices that frequently go unheard are those which express unacceptable views. Adults may silence unacceptable voices directly (Nutbrown and Clough, 2009) and the researcher herself may be presented with ethical dilemmas that must be resolved by reflection-in-action (Reeves, 2007). Curtis et al. ask 'just how non-judgemental should researchers be when dealing with, for instance, racist or homophobic behaviour?' (p.172). This question is particularly pertinent for a researcher who works for the Racial Equality Council, a role of which most of her participants are aware. Her dilemma may be further compounded by issues of disclosure as encountered by Deuchar (2009) investigating gang cultures in Glasgow. If a young student in an interview justifies his sympathies for the Taliban, where lies her moral responsibility?

Authenticity

The issues of self and community censorship discussed above raise the more general question; how authentic are the voices we hear? Kemmis cautions that:

'Undistorted communication is purely ideal-typical: it is never achieved, though the practitioner seeking to understand her or his practice is bound to pursue the ideal' (Kemmis, 1988, p.174).

If the researcher, or the setting, is strongly linked to the school (as with the GCSE English classes at Noor Academy) then pupils may give answers that are 'exam-orientated', consciously or unconsciously aiming to fulfil their teachers' expectations (Rudduck and Fielding, 2006). For both researcher and participants, our perspectives will be shaped and coloured by our 'habitus' (Reay, 2010) or our 'sedimented histories and ideological constructs' (Cruddas, 2007, p.484). However, the dialogue in the confidential research discussion may also provide the space where habitus is transformed unpredictably as participants explore and reshape their own meanings (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Curtis et al. recorded that the young people they interviewed 'were vulnerable to disclosing

information which they may have barely had the time to process themselves' (Curtis et al., 2004, p.171). In Newminster, the peer researchers warned that the 'voice-for-outsiders' might be heard:

'A number of Muslims living in Britain appear to have two personalities – one outside their front door to deal with the society at large, the other inside their homes' (Zahran et al., 2011, p.6).

These cautions must be borne in mind throughout the analysis process.

For this study, a sense of reciprocal working towards a shared understanding is perhaps a more realistic aim than 'authenticity'. Fielding (2004) calls it 'speaking with' and Cruddas (2007) 'dialogic interaction'. Rudduck and Fielding (2006) claim that, for students, authenticity lies in establishing a process of genuine consultation and participation where they are involved in setting the agenda and the direction of the enquiry. In the context of school-based student voice work, Fielding (2004) distinguishes between the models of 'students as researchers' and 'students as co-researchers'. Both models require students and teachers to work in partnership but in the former the teacher's role is to facilitate and support a student-directed research project. The Newminster study has more in common with the second model, where the teacher (in this case the researcher) frames the enquiry and is responsible for its completion. The students (in this case the participants) are engaged at different stages as 'fellow researchers, enquirers and makers of meaning' (Fielding, 2004, p.307). How these roles can be construed as 'participation' is explored in Chapter 3.

The literature outlined in the sections above describes the persisting inequalities of outcomes in the education of Pakistani-heritage young people, and offers competing explanations of the factors affecting those outcomes. The explanations can be broadly

grouped as 'structural' factors in the education system; school-related factors; and 'community factors' which arise from the home culture of the young people (Ogbu and Simons, 1998; Stevens, 2007). The second body of literature considered relates to the importance of giving young people a voice on matters that affect them, which necessarily includes their education. In relation to schools, the effectiveness of the 'student voice' movement is debatable (Rudduck and Flutter, 2004). At its best, initiatives arising from that movement aim to represent the interests of 'students' in general rather than those of a particular marginalized subgroup. Literature on listening to young people whose voices are rarely heard has emerged mainly from the disability movement (Barnes, 2003), and those working for the inclusion of young people with learning disabilities or young children (Walmsley, 2004; Nind, 2011; Nutbrown and Clough, 2009). In the case of young people from ethnic minority backgrounds;

'Relatively scant consideration has been paid to BME young people's *own* constructions of themselves as learners' (Archer and Francis, 2007, p.91).

A number of the studies cited above draw upon Asian young people's experience of stereotypes and racialized identities ascribed to them in the school environment (Bhatti, 1999; Archer, 2003; Shain, 2003). Katz, (2002), addresses the challenge by surveying the views of young people from Bradford on the barriers they encountered when pursuing their 'Thwarted Dreams'. This EdD thesis offers a further contribution through dialogue with Pakistani-heritage young people in Newminster about the factors affecting their own educational outcomes.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

An investigation of the influences upon the educational progress of a particular minority ethnic group in a single local authority, conducted by a white researcher, raises immediate methodological issues. This chapter sets out to address those issues and to justify the choices made in the light of the nature of the study, the relationship between the researcher and the researched, and the work of some significant authors in the same field.

First, the main research paradigms are outlined, and the case for adopting a broadly 'critical' stance for this study reviewed. In such a framework the role of the researcher is both significant and sensitive, and her position in relation to the participants is considered.

Undertaking the Initial Study led me to explore the literature on 'voice', as discussed in Chapter 2. This search revealed very few studies where young people themselves were consulted about the factors affecting their differential progress in education (Archer and Francis, 2007) and steered me towards the methodologies underpinning 'voice' work, in particular, participatory research. The methodological dilemma of adopting a participatory emphasis is discussed in the next section.

A case study investigation may generate a variety of data sources, as proved to be the situation in Newminster, some planned and some fortuitous. The list of sources comprises: statistical attainment data; recordings of interviews and group discussions; notes from meetings; research diaries and a survey. An outline of the sources leads to a discussion of a further methodological dilemma, resulting in a largely pragmatic rationale for the use of mixed methods.

The methods of analysis are considered with an outline of the analytical framework of Bourdieu in the context of the study of the educational progress of Pakistani-heritage pupils. Finally there is a brief discussion of the sources of potential bias associated with the chosen methods, and the strategies adopted to reduce bias.

The evolution of the research question

The research question arose from initial analysis of GCSE results by ethnicity in Newminster conducted by me for the REC. The analysis revealed two distinctive features about the results of the Pakistani-heritage pupils, as outlined in Chapter 1; their rapid progress over the previous 10 years and the unusually small 'gap' between the results of those Pakistani-heritage pupils eligible for FSM and those not eligible for FSM. Thus, for the Initial Study, the focus of the research question was on the outcomes: 'What factors in the educational experience of Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster could explain these differences in outcome?'

The results of the Initial Study highlighted the valuable insights into their own educational progress that the Pakistani-heritage pupils could offer. As the young people talked, they explained the mechanisms leading to the patterns of attainment in terms of upbringing, values and traditions, rather than specific interventions like mentoring and homework clubs although these were mentioned. These preliminary findings had strong links to Bourdieu's concepts of 'habitus' and 'field' as an appropriate framework for analysis, and led to re-wording the research question in terms of 'influences' rather than 'factors'. Thus the question became: 'What do the Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster identify as the influences on their educational progress?' The focus of the main study on the voices of the young people can only provide a partial answer to the original question.

Research methodologies and stances

The initial approach to this study was from a positivist standpoint, where truth is seen as objective and verifiable by empirical evidence. I hoped that by collecting and analysing data on pupils' progress, it would be possible to identify a set of strategies that 'worked'. These could be tested and generalized to produce an Ofsted-style checklist of features of 'the successful multi-ethnic classroom'. Studies broadly of this kind are those by Demie and Maclean (2007) and DfES (2007). However, exploratory discussions of the project with community representatives revealed a much more complex set of interactions, with the need to describe and understand rather than to categorise and measure.

Many researchers seeking to understand social phenomena through the distinctive viewpoint of those involved adopt an interpretivist position (Hammersley, 2007). This stance interprets the 'true' perspective as the changing and subjective one of the people being studied, so it is necessary to try and see the world through their eyes. 'The effects on people's actions of their interpretations of their world create the possibility that people may differ in their responses to the same or similar situations' (Gage, 1989). The relevance of this stance to research in multicultural educational settings is illustrated by Archer and Yamashita's (2003) investigation of 'Inner-city masculinities' in which they challenge explanations based on stereotypes and generalizations. Although I eventually adopted a broadly critical, participatory emphasis, the underpinning principle that people are the 'authorities of their own experience' (Griffiths, 2003, p.82) is drawn from interpretivism.

A third standpoint, which draws from and goes beyond interpretivism, is that of constructivism. Research from this position questions whether truth is absolute or relative, and explores the ways in which people construct their own realities. In particular, constructivists study the symbols and language with which we express and shape our

understanding of the world (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). Clearly this approach is potentially fruitful in the Newminster setting where the participants share neither a culture nor, for some, a first language with their teachers. However, it was not pursued because of my lack of background in linguistics and the study of languages.

Critical stance

Many of the significant authors in the field of race and education (for example Troyna, 1998; Mirza, 1998; Griffiths, 2003; Apple, 2006; Gillborn, 1998, 2008a, 2010a) write from a critical standpoint. This stance focuses attention on the use of power in society, and the mechanisms used by the powerful to create and maintain their dominance of oppressed groups. Here 'truth' lies in the localised historical and social structures that create and maintain inequalities of class, race and gender. The role of research is not, in this case, to be politically neutral but to expose those power mechanisms and so promote social justice for such groups and to allow their 'voice' to be heard.

Mirza (1998) characterises such research as 'non-hierarchical, reciprocal, negotiated, subjective and emancipatory', being both *about* and *for* the communities being researched. The first four of these adjectives sit well with the Newminster study, which arose from questions posed by the REC and was developed and shaped through discussions with groups and individuals in the Pakistani community. Through such discussions I hoped to develop the reciprocity that Mirza cautions is difficult to achieve in such research. She recounts how, when investigating the experiences of South Asian women she was asked to provide help in ways that she felt to be inappropriate, as 'payback' for access and interviews. In practice this presented little problem in the Newminster context as I was only asked to contribute to the community agenda in ways which furthered the research process, such as writing articles for community newsletters, giving talks on aspects of the

work to community groups, and advising students on their own research projects.

However, the extent to which the research can be considered to be emancipatory is problematic and is considered below under 'Participatory research'.

Hammersley (1998) and Foster et al. (2000) argue that research from a critical standpoint, by being 'intentionally partisan', abandons the goal of objectivity and the need to address potential bias. Others, such as Blair (1998), counter that the claimed neutrality in social science research is a myth, as all interpretations are coloured by the researcher's lens. In the context of such a sensitive area as ethnic minority inequalities in education it is impossible to be truly objective, so it seems more honest for the researcher to declare her standpoint overtly and for the evidence she offers to be judged relative to that position. A further criticism raised by Hammersley, is that data from informants are treated differentially. He recommends seeking a range of 'balanced' views. The intention in this study is certainly to present differing views as they arise from students, teachers and community representatives. However, the aim is to give priority to the student 'voice' in order to address a perceived *imbalance* in much current literature for teachers. Gillborn endorses this policy because the 'subordinates' may understand more about the process than their 'superiors' (Gillborn, 1998, p.52). Through the involvement of participants and my peer researchers in reviewing and criticising the findings, I have broadly attempted to follow the direction of critical research described by Cohen et al. (2000) from describing the situation, to understanding it and questioning it, but with the emphasis on working towards a shared understanding.

Participatory Research

Critical theory has much in common with the original purpose of participative action research in education 'to identify and expose those aspects of the existing social order that

frustrate the pursuit of rational goals' (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p.129). Both strands of research methodology have the same commitment to producing knowledge that promotes an egalitarian society both at the level of theory and local practice. A number of authors (Christians, 2000; Carr and Kemmis, 1986; Kindon et al., 2007) link this process of knowledge production for social transformation to Freire's work of popular education through the raising of critical consciousness or 'conscientization' (Freire, 2006). Freire, like his followers in the tradition of critical pedagogy, recognised the importance of action as a consequence of the research process and the challenge that this presents to the teacher/researcher (Kindon et al., 2007). The aim of research in both traditions is explicitly emancipatory – literally to set free individuals and groups to determine aspects of their own lives (Cohen et al., 2000; Denzin, 2005; Kinchloe and McLaren, 2005; Carr and Kemmis, 1986). This is a bold claim and its achievement can only be evaluated retrospectively by researchers and participants. It risks the charge of arrogance that 'we' can emancipate 'others', thereby reinforcing the very power relationships that we aimed to dismantle (Kinchloe and McLaren, 2000; Denzin, 2005). The frequently linked concept of 'empowerment' (Griffiths, 2003) is similarly ambivalent. One important aspect of research with an emancipatory aim is to recognise the authority of the other's 'voice' and for the researcher to hear it with respect and understanding.

'Participatory research has grown up around people who have historically lacked voice' (Nind, 2011, p.350) and so the rationale for this methodology has strands of 'rights', 'emancipation' and 'intrinsic value' that reflect those of the student voice movement discussed in Chapter 2.

In relation to rights, it is argued by some that involving young people as 'participants' rather than 'subjects' in the research process is their right in order to ensure that their voices

are heard. (Nutbrown and Clough, 2009; Lundy, 2007). Members of minoritized groups are involved in investigation and dialogue with the aim of developing 'conscientization' and working for social change to address inequality (Cohen et al., 2000; Carr and Kemmis, 1986; Humphries and Martin, 2000). For some working within this framework, research cannot be fully 'participatory' or 'emancipatory' unless participants have complete control of the agenda, working towards their own interests (Barnes, 2003). Thus an EdD thesis could not be considered truly participatory in that sense. In the case of research with children and young people, the movement for children-as-researchers (Kellett, 2009) is underpinned by a view of children as independent agents, with valid perspectives of their own, rather than as underdeveloped adults. This portrayal is allied to the premise that 'identity produces knowledge' (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008, p.502) in that children and young people are reflexive beings who are best placed to understand themselves.

Thus, the themes of children's rights, emancipation and self-knowledge have resulted in a range of methods developed by adults to enable young people to participate in all stages of the research process. Recent literature in the field of inclusive education offers a range of methods to engage 'hard to reach' young people (Curtis et al., 2004; Lundy 2007). Gibson and Costello (2000) illustrate the principle of allowing young people to express their feelings through a medium with which they feel comfortable. In an imaginative study of pupils' disenchantment with numeracy, young art students were encouraged to draw pictures of themselves 'doing maths' to complement their narrative accounts. Other students may find the familiarity and anonymity of e-consultation encourages them to speak freely (Lundy, 2007). In Newminster, the young people's survey provided a medium where they hoped the respondents could feel comfortable because it was administered by their peers, with a choice of oral or written questions and responses, and the results were anonymous. From their own research, Curtis et al. (2004) illustrate the use of material

incentives to participants in certain situations but in the Newminster study the researcher has relied on the participants' intrinsic interest in the data and sense of 'consummatory' motivation; the reward being that their contribution will potentially be of benefit to other members of the (Pakistani-heritage) community. These methods must all be subject to the same critique of polarisation and manipulation as the student voice movement discussed in Chapter 2. Further, the assumed link between participation and freedom must be questioned in terms of how far is their participation motivated by a desire to please adults, or to fulfil teacher expectations (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008)?

In the light of these criticisms, rather than struggling with the question: 'Is this research participatory or not?', an alternative framework is to view participation as a spectrum of different levels (Nind, 2011), and participatory methods as an extension of ethnographic methods (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008). The placing of young people as co-researchers (Fielding, 2004) is a realistic position for them in the Newminster study. The researcher retains overall responsibility for the enquiry whilst seeking to involve them as fully as possible in negotiation, dialogue and activity at each stage of the journey. The researcher thus exposes herself to the risk of learning uncomfortable truths and of having a carefully planned schedule disrupted. She must also abandon the hope of achieving a neat consensus or a united 'voice' for the group, as the voices of the participants express conflicting views and priorities (Humphries and Martin, 2000).

The participatory emphasis in the Newminster study, then, is that of creating a space for dialogue (Fielding, 2004) and 'dialogic interaction' (Cruddas, 2007), where participants can speak on their own behalf, recognising and exploring their differences (Humphries and Martin, 2000). Byrne et al. (2009) support the view that the aim of engaging in 'meaningful

partnerships seeking meaningful data for social transformation' (pp.67,68) is a more significant characteristic of participatory research than the use of particular methods.

In the search for 'meaningful data' it is important to ensure that the issues discussed are significant to the participants, and not framed in language that is alien to them (Rudduck and Fielding, 2006). This potential barrier is illustrated by the Newminster survey where the questions were discussed by the young people, but written down using terms like 'voice' and 'YP' that were unfamiliar to some of the respondents. For the data collection stage, I was relegated to the role of negotiating access with schools for the pupils to take part, the survey being administered entirely by the young people, thus reducing, but not necessarily eliminating, the 'interviewer effect'. In discussions and interviews I tried to minimise my own input after the initial scene-setting, only rarely using prompts to keep the discussion 'on track' (cf Deuchar, 2009). This practice led to open discussions that often strayed significantly from the introductory topic, presenting an alternative dilemma over what to include when reporting findings. Thus, my voice still interjects but at a different stage in the process.

Aspects of 'voice' in participatory research

The concept of 'voice', of people who feel disempowered expressing their own positions in circumstances where those in powerful positions pay attention, is often invoked in studies within a critical, emancipatory, or participatory framework (Griffiths, 2003; Lincoln and Guba, 2000; Kindon et al., 2007). The idea of 'giving voice' to such groups is said to constitute empowerment (Griffiths, 2003) although it has the same patronising aura in implying that 'voice' like 'power' can be bestowed by the powerful upon the powerless. In the context of critical feminist research, Mirza advocates that 'research should address women's lives and experience in their own terms and ground theory in the actual

experience of women' (Mirza, 1995, p.165). This statement is equally true for other disadvantaged groups such as those subordinated because of their race or social class. It encapsulates three features of 'voice'; that the concept focuses on marginalised groups; it highlights their 'interior authority'; and its validity comes from the speaker rather than their audience. (Hadfield and Haw, 2001)

Any discussion of 'voice ' raises questions of whose voice is being heard and at what volume? How can we know that the voice is authentic and who is listening? In any research account the researcher's voice is always present, whether acknowledged or not. Traditionally, the author wrote from a disembodied position (Guba & Lincoln, 2005) but in several contemporary paradigms, particularly those of critical theory and participatory action research, the voices of participants and researcher are interspersed. The researcher's self is acknowledged in her own voice, as are the ways in which that self is shaping and being transformed by the research process (Lincoln and Guba 2000; Guba and Lincoln, 2005). Chase (2005) identifies three 'voices' that the researcher may adopt at different points; the 'authoritative', in interpretation and analysis; the 'supportive', that highlights the voices of the participants; and the 'interactive' voice, with which the researcher examines her own position 'through the refracted medium of narrators' voices' (Chase, 2005, p.666). These different voices reflect Fielding's (2004) positions of the researcher speaking 'about', 'for' and 'with' the participants as discussed in Chapter 2. Participants, too, may adopt different voices within a single account as they assume different roles (for example, in Newminster, as mother or teacher, or as commentator on their own narratives). When a participant claims to be representing a community perspective it is important to ask who has the authority to do this? Is there a 'we' in the community being represented? (Cahill and Torre, 2007)

In many social and organisational settings it is true that 'A tiny proportion of people have the megaphone most of the time, and, worse, come to believe that they are the only ones who say anything worth hearing' (Griffiths, 2003, p.89). In research with a critical stance, it is therefore important to 'turn up the volume' (Nutbrown and Clough, 2009) on those who are usually unheard, or silenced. When the researcher uses the 'authoritative' voice her voice is inevitably dominant, so it is important that she try to do justice to the original narratives (Chase, 2005). When selecting passages of the participants' own speech for inclusion the researcher's voice is still present in the background, but by including significant passages of dialogue she allows (and risks) others to interpret them differently (Chase, 2005). Participants themselves use voice at different levels, from simply expressing views to active participation in decision-making (Hadfield and Haw, 2001). Marginalised voices in particular have a tendency 'to be heard as shouts and unreasonable rants when they first break the silence' (De Palma, 2010).

The participants' 'authentic' voices are likely to prove elusive (Griffiths, 2003; Chase, 2005). The stories people tell are inevitably mediated by their own cultural and social environments and who they think is listening. Research participants in particular may tend to talk in generalities, even about their own experiences, because that is what they think researchers want to hear (Chase, 2005). It is more realistic, therefore, to acknowledge the participants as the 'authorities of their own experience' (Griffiths, 2003, p.82) and to explore their own understanding of those experiences.

Role and position of the Researcher

Having argued that it is impossible for the researcher to be truly impartial, and that her voice will inevitably emerge throughout the process, it is important to examine the role and position of the researcher in this study in relation to the participants.

Two concepts underpinning this discussion are, first, those of 'matching' aspects of the researcher's identity with those of the researched, and, secondly, the participants' 'placing' of the position of the researcher.

Matching

In the investigation of factors affecting a particular ethnic group by a white researcher, the mismatch of 'race', and the potential imbalance of power resulting from this, must be questioned. It would be illogical to assume that while the ethnicity and culture of the participants may influence their educational progress, the ethnicity of the investigator has no bearing on the research process. Archer (2002) examines how differences between researchers and participants interact to produce various research outcomes, and demonstrates how such differences can affect all stages of the research.

Some writers from the anti-racist and feminist traditions advocate that researchers and participants should be matched by ethnicity and gender in order to reduce the imbalance of power between them. They argue that when white researchers focus on black communities there is a danger that the minority group is pathologized by the research and the findings may be used to perpetuate stereotypes and inequalities. Others, such as Rathkit (1998) and Mirza (1998) present advantages for 'matched' interviewing in terms of a shared cultural understanding and experience of racism that can facilitate both the interview process and the interpretation of data. Rathkit found that her 'insider' status gave her access to a greater depth of disclosure by her participants, by using self-disclosure and a common language. Archer (2002) suggests that the black pupils in her study may have been inhibited by her racial identification with their white teachers when asked about instances of teacher racism. These arguments and cautions must be addressed in the context of the Newminster study.

First, if the anti-racist feminist arguments are pursued to their logical conclusion so that white researchers only engage with white participants, and black communities are investigated solely by black researchers, then there is a danger of creating an academic apartheid that is counter to the goal of sharing understanding in this study.

Secondly, the mutually exclusive categories of 'black' and 'white' suggest a positivist view of identity that many authors would contest. 'Black' is not a homogenous designation, and neither, in Newminster, is 'Pakistani'. There are significant differences of perspective between those from a rural Mirpuri background and those who are graduates from Lahore, and between those who were born and educated in Pakistan and those whose families have lived in Britain for two or three generations.

As many writers such as Connolly (1998), Archer (2002), Merriam et al. (2001), Bhatti, (2011) have explained, identities are complex and shifting and matching by skin colour does not take account of other aspects of the power balance between the researcher and the researched. These aspects include gender, age, faith, education, professional and family status, and location. Both Mirza and Archer felt disadvantaged because they were not 'local' to their study sites. Vincent (2005) found that although she had been matched by gender to the participants in her research, she was placed as 'other' through her different professional status.

In Newminster the complexities of 'matching' were immediately apparent in the discussions for the Initial Study. My gender was a definite asset when interviewing Muslim women and female pupils. With men, my teacher status and (late middle) age made it possible for them to talk to me without losing honour (Zahid 10-10-13), which would have

presented difficulties with a younger female researcher. Conversely, the mismatch of my age with the young people proved to represent a bigger distance than my ethnicity. The pupils at the Noor Academy explained insistently to me that they would speak more openly to another young person than to a 'special' adult, which they confirmed to mean 'old researcher'. These aspects are considered in more detail in Chapter 5.

Several researchers also recount advantages of the status of an 'outsider within'.

Interviewees may feel more comfortable talking to a 'friendly stranger' because they retain more control over what is said. By not assuming a common cultural understanding they may explain their experiences more carefully and the researcher is less likely to conflate these with similar experiences of her own. Mirza (1998) felt that she achieved more objective data because the participants did not assume that her perceptions would be the same as theirs.

The nearest description of my role in relation to the participants in the Newminster study is that of an 'invited outsider'. I work on the principle that I only attend informal groups and meetings if invited, and whenever I *am* invited, I go.

Placing

The related concept of 'placing' is described by Archer (2002) as 'an important way for respondents to attempt to assess the researcher's position, her preconceptions, and the potential risks of participation'. However well the researcher believes that she is matched to the participants, their placing of her may challenge that position. Mirza (1998) found that, although she shared a skin colour with the respondents, her placing by the Asian women she was interviewing became problematic because of her Western dress, lifestyle and career, and she ended up questioning her own identity.

For the Pakistani community in Newminster, locating the stranger within a network of known others appears to form an important part of the placing process. I was frequently told, on contacting a potential participant, 'my brother/father knows you – he told me about you', or 'you were at such-and-such a community meeting'. (Often, being the only white woman in such meetings makes for easy recognition). Other contacts have sent e-mails inviting me to sign the latest 'Muslim Petition'. These may be interpreted as testing out my placing in relation to the community's agenda. Being 'known' appears to allow a certain degree of openness in discussion. When asked how she felt about being interviewed by a white researcher, one participant responded, 'it is different because I know you – I wouldn't have told you all this if I didn't know you' (Ayesha, 20-12-11). This interpretation does not, of course, preclude the possibility that I would have learned more had I been better 'known' or better 'matched'.

Research approach

The form of the research question suggested that a case study approach would be the most appropriate – this is a study of *one* community within *one* local authority (Cohen et al, 2000). Case studies are often chosen for educational research because of 'the context-dependent nature of judgements' about methods in relation to values and principles (Elliott, 2001, p.566), and in Newminster the context permeates every discussion of educational progress. An understanding of the underlying processes at work in this context would have been difficult to achieve through another approach (Burgess et al., 2006). An experimental approach would require a greater level of preconception and prescription by the researcher, which would not sit well within a critical framework.

It would have been possible to pursue the investigation of factors associated with the patterns in the quantitative data by administering a large-scale attitudinal survey to

appropriate year groups in schools. The responses could then have been analysed to identify correlations with the attainment data, in the manner of Strand (2007, 2008) and much of the work of the Durham University CEM centre. This approach was rejected, partly because of the practicalities of processing such large quantities of survey data. Also, such analyses can identify associations between factors and outcomes but are unlikely to suggest the theories that link them (Dyson and Todd, 2010). To design a manageable survey these factors would have necessarily been identified in advance by the researcher, whereas, in the spirit of participatory enquiry, they should be described by the participants. The later decision to include some of the findings from the young people's own survey is discussed below under the section 'A methodological dilemma'.

A case study is suitable for this investigation because the context is specific and highly relevant to the outcomes. The intention was to build a rich bank of evidence drawn from a range of perspectives and events in the Newminster Pakistani community, as outlined under the 'Data collected' section below. As Cohen et al. (2000) point out, examining effects in context is more likely to illuminate their causes than other approaches, such as correlation studies. A further feature is that the findings can be easily interpreted and generate action, which is an important aim of this study.

Cohen et al. observe that, 'the use of critical theory in case study research is (in 2000) at a comparatively embryonic stage' but that this approach 'offers rich potential' (Ibid p.181). From a critical standpoint an advantage of the case study is that it can illuminate features that are often 'averaged out' in larger scale work, as deplored by Gillborn (2010a). It can also illuminate conflicts and discrepancies in the evidence of different participants rather than portraying simply the modal view.

The main criticisms of the case study approach are that the findings are specific to the context, making it difficult to replicate or generalize the results; and that it is particularly susceptible to researcher bias. Both these aspects, and the possible ways of mitigating them, are explored below.

Generalizability

Schofield (1990) explores forms of generalizability that may be applicable to case studies. She identifies three choices of 'site' (or case) for study; a 'typical' site which may in some aspects be representative of others; a 'cutting edge' site that is at the forefront of the development from which others may learn; and a site that exemplifies good practice in the area that is under investigation. It is possible that, when set in the national context, the Pakistani community in Newminster can be described as one (or more) of these cases, and this is explored in Chapter 6. However, the primary focus is to enhance the knowledge and understanding of local practitioners and community leaders. The secondary aim is to provide sufficient contextual detail to enable others to evaluate how far the findings are transferable to their own situations.

The data collected

In embracing the role of an 'invited outsider' – I go where I am invited, and when I'm invited, I go – I was likely to acquire an eclectic collection of data and this was indeed the outcome. The collection includes numerical data, a survey, recordings of group discussions and individual interviews, notes from meetings, and research diaries. One obvious omission, which Delamont (2002) describes as superior to any other source of educational research, is observation. As a teacher trainer whose students include several madrassah teachers, I have regular opportunities to observe classes in a variety of settings, and notes from some of these are included in the research diaries. However, they are not included as a distinct data source for two reasons. First, ethically, there is a potential conflict of roles

(Cohen et al., 2000); am I taking notes to assess the teaching and learning, or to further my own research? Secondly, I have an extremely limited visual field, which would introduce a particular kind of researcher bias that would be difficult to assess or moderate.

The genesis and development of this study strongly indicate the use of methods drawn from both 'quantitative' and 'qualitative' paradigms. The different sources of evidence are used not merely in an additive way, but to reinforce and challenge the implications drawn from individual sources.

The numerical data

Without the quantitative data the research question would not have been asked. It arose from the analysis of Local Authority data on the attainment of different minority ethnic groups that I had undertaken for the Newminster REC. This analysis showed patterns in the relative attainment of the main minority ethnic groups that broadly reflected national data, but with some significant differences. The numerical nature of this data and the city-wide sample size, allows tests of statistical significance to be applied. Gillborn (2010a) rightly cautions against the danger of such tests being used to justify the omission of results from numerically small minority groups. In this study significance tests are only used to refute some initial criticism that the results could have arisen from normal variation between cohorts.

The numerical data are the annually produced Local Authority School attainment figures, broken down by ethnicity, gender and eligibility for Free School Meals. Gorard (2002) commends the inclusion of existing statistics because they 'provide a context for any new study which is as important as the literature review' (p.347). In the Newminster study they play an integral role in the study beyond that of setting the context of the research question.

In initial discussions with community representatives and young people, they proved to be a good stimulus for discussion of the influences upon the progress of Pakistani-heritage pupils. They supported the decision to focus the research on the Pakistani-heritage community, which was readily and rightly challenged in REC circles. Because they lend themselves naturally to visual and graphical presentation, these data can be easily understood by people with little technical knowledge and limited English language skills. This form of presentation generated interest and, importantly, access to community groups. An initial presentation of contextual data in entirely graphical formats to a group of Imams, with a translator, led to a number of invitations and contacts that would have been difficult to achieve otherwise.

The survey

A survey, either as research 'approach' or data source, was rejected in the Initial Study because it would have involved too much prescription and preconception by the researcher, contrary to the participatory aim of the study. However, this objection was overruled when three of the young people who had been involved in the initial discussions acquired some training and a modest grant to undertake a survey of their peers on issues of importance to them. I had no part in the survey design, but the young researchers included questions on the educational issues that we had discussed, as well as seeking views on inter-community and inter-generational relations that were contextually relevant to my study (Appendix (xii)). Some questions generated numerical data but the majority sought open-ended comments. Beyond the initial negotiation of access and ensuring that informed consent was obtained, the young people alone were responsible for gathering the data, thereby reducing a potential form of (old) researcher bias (Noor Academy, 6-12-12, Cohen et al., 2000). They then brought the completed forms to me for analysis, anticipating (correctly) that this would be a very time-consuming process. The term 'survey' is used because that is how the

young people described their project; they did not seek predetermined multiple choice responses that they associated with 'questionnaires'. With 165 completed responses, as a method it is not comparable to large-scale attitudinal surveys such as Strand (2007). However, it does serve to illustrate the diversity of views within one community and to suggest common strands across communities. Approximately half the respondents were of Pakistani heritage and half from other ethnic backgrounds, offering the potential for easy comparison, where relevant.

Data from interviews and group discussions

'The stories people tell *constitute* the empirical material that interviewers need if they are to understand how people create meanings out of events in their lives' (Chase, 2005, p.660).

The main sources of qualitative data are the interviews and discussions undertaken with a range of participants (introduced in Chapter 4), supplemented by notes and documents from community meetings and conferences. The involvement of participants by a process of self-selection is inevitably 'opportunistic' so represents a clear source of potential bias, as discussed in Chapter 5. Views were sought from those with a range of perspectives, partly in response to the criticisms of such research by Hammersley (1998). The participants include young people who were studying for, and those who had recently taken, GCSEs; parents, community leaders, Imams, teachers and teaching assistants. Many of them have multiple identities – most of the last three groups will be parents, and many have themselves attended local schools. Prior to the study I was known to several of the participants in different roles; as teacher, REC representative, and through inter-faith work.

Ethical Issues

The nature of the research and the multiple roles of the researcher in relation to the

participants, raise a range of ethical issues at different stages of the research (Burgess et al., 2006). These issues have been addressed as outlined below, guided by the BERA Revised Ethical Guidelines (2004).

In all cases, access was negotiated informally with individuals through discussions about the research and followed up with a formal letter of information and consent which included clarification of my role (Appendix iii). For the young people's group (all of whom are over 16) access was negotiated with the group leader and then with each individual. As the Noor pupils were under 16 in the first round of discussions, written permission for their involvement was sought from the Head Teacher and from their parents, as well as the pupils themselves. All those approached showed interest in the content of the research and willingly agreed to participate. As discussed below, this cooperation raises other questions relating to the validity of the data provided. All potential participants appeared to understand the discussion of the project and the implications of their participation (Cohen et al., 2000). As stated in the letter, all have been given an opportunity to review the interview data. During the course of the study, several of the Noor pupils reached the age of 16, so I revisited them when writing up the data, showed them the extracts I planned to use and again requested their permission to use their comments. Some details have been changed on request as a result of this review process and my interpretations have been reviewed with one of the peer researchers. The location, schools and individuals in the study have all been given fictitious names to protect their identities as far as possible. It is acknowledged that the different schools could still be identifiable from their characteristics by someone who knows the area, but these have only been mentioned in contextual information which is unlikely to be deemed contentious.

Interviewing in practice

Having obtained appropriate permissions and following some experimentation, the interviews were recorded on a digital voice recorder and transcribed manually by the researcher. Video recording was ruled out because some of the female Muslim participants would not wish their images to be recorded. Contextual notes relating to each interview were also made, though not during the discussion as this was felt, both practically and psychologically, to interrupt the flow.

The interviews and group discussions recorded for the Initial Study were all conducted in the 'narrative' spirit described by Chase (2005). I briefly shared the findings of the quantitative achievement data in graphical form and then invited discussion with little further intervention. The literature on 'voice' work reviewed in Chapter 2 (Rudduck and Fielding, 2006; Cruddas, 2007; Fielding, 2004), demonstrated the value of allowing the participants to lead the discussion on topics that were important to them in the general field of school and education. In this spirit, further small group discussions and seven lengthy individual conversations were recorded that were completely unstructured. In these, the discussions ranged, in ever-increasing circles, around the topics stemming from the participants' experiences of school and community classes. This undirected approach I hoped would reduce the pressure to give views to please the interviewer (Campbell et al., 2004). At the same time, my growing commitment to participatory research led me to consider the feasibility of undertaking participatory data analysis (Nind, 2011). To attempt the process I prepared a checklist of questions in advance, before recording three group discussions with pupils who had been respondents in the survey, specifically focused on problems arising from the initial analysis and interpretation of the survey. Using the survey results as a topic for discussion and consultation with two GCSE English classes at the Noor Academy proved enjoyable for the pupils. For the purpose of recording, the seminar

style of discussion had the advantage that the pupils were accustomed to the practice of taking turns and listening to one another's views. (English classes, Noor Academy, 6-12-11). However, in this situation the pupils will be particularly prone to using language that they think their teachers want to hear (Lewis, 2001) and unlikely to express views that are deemed to be 'unacceptable'. The process of analysis was also shared with three of the original group of young co-researchers and my two peer-researchers. The ensuing discussions were recorded and are discussed in Chapter 5.

Data from discussions with peer researchers

The peer researchers make a vital contribution to the methodology. Without them I would not have had the confidence to conduct the study as an 'invited outsider'. We met once or twice a term throughout the study and continue to meet for lengthy unstructured discussions on areas of mutual research interest. Both provided their insights into the background, history, religious and cultural traditions of the Pakistani-heritage community in Newminster and how these factors blend and shape the habitus of the young people who are the focus of the study. Hameeda read my drafts of discussion and analysis and offered constructive criticism from an 'insider' perspective. Hameeda was educated at school in Newminster and at university in Pakistan. She taught for some years in Pakistan and now teaches at both the Noor Academy and Eastminster Academy. Several of her conversations were recorded, and extracts are included in the relevant sections. Imam Zahid preferred not to be recorded but agreed for me to make notes of our conversations in my research diary. As his own doctoral research covers the teaching methods used in Islamic education in the UK, he explained many aspects of the religious and cultural context of the pupils' education.

Research Diary

The decision to focus the research question on the voices of the Pakistani-heritage pupils poses a problem over whether to include data that relate to their progress, but which were gathered from discussions with councillors, teachers, and former staff of the multi-cultural education service, and recorded in the research diary. It is important, particularly when adopting a broadly critical stance, to engage in 'deliberate self-scrutiny in relation to the research process' (Hellawell, 2006); my research diary records my attempts to do this. It also contains notes from a wide range of activities within the Muslim community in which I was invited to participate, either in a professional capacity, or as an inter-faith representative, or directly in relation to the study. These include community conferences in relation to education and parenting; teacher training for Imams and madrassah teachers; staff development for the Noor Academy and activities in relation to social cohesion in the city. The diaries chart my changing role in relation to other participants during the study. For instance, when the Eastminster Academy announced plans to withdraw Urdu from the curriculum, I moved from 'speaking for' the Pakistani community (in my role at the REC) to 'speaking with' them (Fielding, 2004) when I was invited to accompany community representatives to a meeting with the head teacher (Urdu meeting, Eastminster Academy, 7-2-12). These data are presented in a supporting role, in the section 'Data from other sources,' in Chapter 4. They are included in the discussion at points where they amplify, or challenge, the young people's perspectives.

A methodological dilemma

Does the diversity of data described above present a rich tapestry or an epistemological conflict? Having adopted a case study approach, with a broadly critical stance, must I disregard the data offered by the survey?

Over the past 20 years there have been fiercely contested debates in educational research between those who advocate the application of scientifically based, quantitative methods within the positivist paradigm and those who reject such methods for the study of human experience. The former include Hargreaves (1996) who championed the cause of 'evidence-based practice' in education, using methods such as large-scale, randomised, controlled trials drawn from the evidence-based movement in medical research and training. Much contemporary policy-making in education prioritises accountability that requires measurable outcomes (Greene, 2005) supported by an evidence base of 'what works'. The latter group, located in the interpretivist or critical paradigms, reject such positivist approaches to the evaluation of education and, in consequence, some researchers eschew the methods associated with them (Lincoln and Guba, 2000; Pring, 2000). They endorse Bassey's (1995) definition of educational research as 'predominantly a science of the singular' (p.144). A growing number of researchers such as Gage (1989) and Plowright (2010), argue that the demarcation that fuelled the 'paradigms wars' limits researchers' access to the full range of methods appropriate to their investigation. These researchers advocate the use of 'mixed methods' or 'integrated methodologies' (Plowright, 2011), where the types of data used are those that illuminate the particular question and the methods are tailored to suit the data. It is this latter approach that is adopted here, supported by precedent, principle and pragmatism.

A precedent has been set by Bourdieu. His 'theory of practice' encompasses both objective and subjective ways of understanding in relation to educational experience (Bourdieu, 1977; Grenfell and James, 1998). Bourdieu's own investigation of educational inequalities blended statistical analysis with consideration of 'the ensemble of the social characteristics which define the initial situation of children' (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990, p.89). Others have used his analytical framework and mixed methods to investigate racial inequalities in

education, similar to those in Newminster, that challenge conventional explanations (Modood, 2004).

In principle, an enquiry using a variety of data sources has the potential to be more illuminating than the sum of its parts; it can do this by inviting participants to tell their own stories *about* the quantitative data. Dyson and Todd (2010) adopted a method of evaluation for complex contexts where 'evaluators work with actors to explicate the latter's underpinning... theories' (Dyson and Todd, 2010, p.124). In a study whose context is diversity, it makes sense to value diversity in ways of thinking and method (Greene, 2005).

The pragmatic argument is also relevant to the Newminster study. If different types of data contribute different insights into the research question, then they should not be rejected because they are the 'wrong' sort (Gorard, 2002; Plowright, 2011). Each can inform the other:

'The qualitative investigation can clear the ground for the quantitative – and the quantitative be suggestive of differences to be explored in a more interpretative mode' (Pring, 2000, p.259).

For this study the aim is to approach the research question using the different types of data in a spiral model. Rather than using young people's quotations merely to 'humanise' dry statistics, or the numerical data simply to provide a context for the narrative, I hope that the interaction of the two will generate a fuller understanding of both. First, I analysed the achievement data and shared the results with the young people and parents who then discussed their own explanations of the trends and anomalies. The young people, now as co-researchers, explored some of the questions further in their own survey of their peers. I then invited groups of the respondents and my peer-researchers, to contribute to the

analysis and to challenge my interpretation of the survey. I was indeed going round in circles, but making progress at the same time. Thus, I hoped to develop a shared understanding of the research question, by revisiting the issues from different directions at each stage.

An example of this recursive process is the investigation of the concept of 'tradition'. The idea was proposed by the young people as an explanation of the notably good performance of Pakistani-heritage pupils in receipt of FSM.

Haris: 'To be honest with you, I'd love to share the secrets but you can't, it's upbringing, its culture, its values – (others make sounds of agreement, Yeah, yeah,) – which a lot of my white friends, even my Indian friends, at school don't have as much as we would.'

Shahzad: '... it's like parenting and everything.'

Haris: 'It's hundreds of years of tradition.'

(Young people, 5-1-11)

This exchange prompted me to investigate the literature on 'capitals' and 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1983; Grenfell and James, 1998) and to discuss the concepts with my peer researchers. Meanwhile, the young people included the questions: 'What do you share in common with your parents' generation?' and 'What differences do you have to your parents' generation?' in their survey. The responses to these questions provide both resonance and dissonance with Haris's explanation. Reporting the *number* of responses that mention 'culture', 'values' or 'tradition' is not a significant part of the analysis, but the outcomes provide the basis for the next round of discussions. One of my peer researchers commented; 'Ah, it all depends what you mean by 'tradition' – I think I can help you with that....' (Zahid, 20-4-12)

Selection of data

An immediate problem with the approach outlined above is that it generates considerable quantities of diverse and disputing data. The process of selection from the data places the researcher in control (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). How can she maintain a reciprocal, participatory stance when she alone has the power to include or delete the comments of others from the record? Whose 'little stories' should be told (Griffiths, 2003)?

'The danger of the feedback approach [to participatory analysis] is that only the analysis and theory that fit with those of the academic researcher may make their way forward into discussion' (Nind, 2011, p.359).

This danger is an acknowledged criticism of the 'spiral' approach outlined above. The researcher can only try to make her selection process explicit and to involve participants and peer researchers in the exercise as fully as their time and interest allow.

The central aim is to give priority to the voices of the young people and to follow up themes arising from their narrative through related responses in the survey, subsequent discussions, and the literature. Here the nature of the survey is particularly useful in identifying 'modal forms' of responses and to illustrate the 'textured variations of identity within any single category' (Fine and Weiss, 2005, p.67). Hameeda's support and criticism as peer-researcher has been important in reviewing the selection of comments from the transcripts. Discussing analysis of the survey with groups of respondents has also steered me back to review earlier decisions. For instance, the responses to the question: 'Who do you think do better, boys or girls, and why?' were of particular importance to the school discussion groups (Noor Academy, 6-12-11), which sent me back over this theme in the initial statistics and interview transcripts. With interview data the process of revisiting and reviewing transcripts with the participants is important for the participatory ethos as well

as for ethical purposes. It also recognises 'the role played by time and space with the data' (Nind, 2011, p.357); the young people have moved on and updated their own profile.

In adopting the approach described above, I have had to abandon the search for a neat consensus on the factors affecting the progress of Pakistani-heritage pupils. There are competing voices within each group of participants and between data sources, as illustrated above with the views of the young people on 'tradition' and contrasting responses in their own survey. I have responded to such conflicts in two ways. Where possible, I have investigated them with the participants to generate further dialogue. Subsequently, I have recorded the area of dispute in order to demonstrate the diverse and shifting perspectives that emerge (Griffiths, 2003; Archer and Francis, 2007).

Data analysis

The problems of researcher bias and control, identified above in relation to data selection, persist throughout the process of data analysis (Charmaz, 2005). The strategy used to moderate the researcher's dominance is, again, to make the methods explicit and to engage participants as fully as possible. In a case study where the voices of the participants are given prominence, it seems appropriate to consider grounded theory as a method of analysis which involves 'letting the data speak for themselves'. The method entails 'the discovery of theory from data' (Glaser and Strauss, 1999, p.2) rather than using data to verify, exemplify or extend existing theories. The analytical system of grounded theory uses an iterative process of coding data to generate conceptual categories and using constant comparison to integrate the categories to produce generalised relations. (Glaser and Strauss, 1999).

The system Glaser and Strauss describe, in which codings and categories are iteratively updated in the light of new data, suits the spiral method of data collection described above. Further, it embraces both quantitative and qualitative data as useful in generating theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1999). I was initially unsure about using grounded theory because these authors advise against commitment to a particular theoretical framework. Would this caution render the use of grounded theory methods incompatible with my commitment to a critical stance, and with the use of Bourdieu's concepts which had been helpful in my thinking? However, Charmaz (2005) advocates the application of grounded theory in the investigation of inequalities such as the Newminster study. 'The critical stance in social justice in combination with the analytic focus of grounded theory broadens and sharpens the enquiry' (p.508).

The iterative process of data analysis also facilitates the input of participants, at any stage, in the spirit of a participative study. Participation in data analysis is much rarer than participation in data collection (Byrne et al., 2009; Nind, 2011). Nevertheless, in a study designed to promote the voice of young people on matters that concern them, it is methodologically inconsistent to exclude them from this phase of the research. It is also important to acknowledge the realities of the endeavour (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008). Some researchers have addressed the issue that young people (in general) lacked certain research skills by providing training in methods and techniques of analysis (Kellett, 2009; Byrne et al., 2009). In Newminster, the young people who conducted the survey had received some training in basic research skills, but when it came to the tedious, time-consuming task of sifting and coding the responses they made a clear decision that this was a function for the 'old researcher'. I had more success in involving them in interpreting the youthful responses, as discussed in Chapter 5.

Both peer researchers have also contributed to the analysis, bringing their own cultural and community understandings into dialogue with me. However, even with the help of participants and peer researchers, such a complex array of data requires a conceptual framework and a set of analytical tools with which to comprehend the setting in which the young people live and study. Their initial reaction to the statistical data, explaining their own attitudes to education in terms of tradition and upbringing, led me to investigate the framework offered by Pierre Bourdieu.

Bourdieu – a conceptual framework

Bourdieu offers both a 'theory of practice' (Bourdieu, 1977) and a conceptual framework that bridges the conventional divisions between some of the methodological paradigms outlined above. The literature suggests that it was Bourdieu's intention that:

‘First and foremost habitus is a conceptual tool to be used in empirical research rather than an idea to be debated in texts’ (Reay, 2004, p.439).

Reading and re-reading the Newminster transcripts, it seemed that participants were relating, in different ways, how their histories, their culture, their beliefs shaped their responses to their experiences of schooling – and how these in turn influenced their ongoing histories and reactions. Such descriptions resonate with one reading of ‘habitus’ (Maton, 2008).

The wide-ranging nature and complexity of Bourdieu's theory make it impossible to provide a concise summary (Navarro, 2006). However, it is necessary to outline some of the key concepts in order to assess their relevance to a study of the experience of Pakistani-heritage pupils in a specific location within the UK education system. Bourdieu articulates a number of concepts as analytical tools. Of particular relevance for the study of inequalities in education are 'habitus', 'field', and 'capitals'.

'Habitus' is described by Bourdieu as:

'a system of ...dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions' (Bourdieu, 1977, p.95).

It can be understood as a set of internal dispositions, of an individual or a group, that colour their perspectives and prompt behaviour. These dispositions arise partly as the result of past experience and upbringing, but are also shaped by current circumstances and actions. In Bourdieu's terms, habitus is both 'structured' by an individual's background and prior experiences, and 'structuring' his or her response to subsequent encounters (Maton, 2008). Hence habitus is reproduced within the family, the community and the school but may also be transformed through new experiences (such as schooling) and is 'continuously restructured by individuals' encounters with the outside world' (Reay, 2004, p.434).

'Habitus is a kind of transforming machine that leads us to reproduce the social conditions of our own production, but in a relatively unpredictable way' (Bourdieu, 1993, p.87).

Although Bourdieu's own work focuses on the habitus related to social class, the concept resonates with the dispositions 'embedded' by their upbringing and culture described by the Newminster participants. Habitus operates in relation to a particular 'field' or social space where interactions take place (Thompson, 2008).

'Field' is the objective setting with which habitus interacts. It represents 'a structured system of social relations at a micro and macro level' (Grenfell and James, 1998, p.16).

Bourdieu describes education as a field and particular sectors or individual institutions, such as schools, as sub-fields (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Of particular relevance in the

Newminster study is the question of how the habitus of Pakistani-heritage pupils equips them to engage with the field of the school. Religion, an important setting in the lives of the young people in Newminster, features very little in Bourdieu's work, but could also be construed as a 'field' in his terms, with the capacity to 'generate habitus'. (Nice, 1990; Dianteill, 2003).

In Bourdieu's concept of 'capitals', 'symbolic capital' is analogous to economic capital, but may exist in the form of social capital, and cultural capital. Like economic capital, these forms of capital may be accrued by a group or an individual and inflated or devalued according to the field in which they are tendered and exchanged from one form to another (Grenfell and James, 1998; Lareau, 1999). Social capital represents the network of contacts of the individual or group. Cultural capital is acquired through the family and through education. It may be displayed in the form of qualifications, or the marks of an 'educated' character (such as accent or learning), or in relation to institutions such as universities or libraries (Grenfell and James, 1998; Modood, 2004). After Bourdieu, other authors have developed further ideas of capitals such as 'ethnic capital'(Modood, 2004), 'family capital' (Archer and Francis, 2007), and 'resistant capital' (Yosso, 2005).

The main query regarding the applicability of Bourdieu's analytical tools to the Newminster study is that the empirical grounding for his theory is in the social class distinctions of 20th-century France and Algeria, with little reference to the dimension of race or ethnicity. However, contemporary researchers (for example, Reay, 1998, 2004; Modood, 2004; Lareau and Horvat, 1999; Archer and Francis 2007; Shah et al., 2010) have demonstrated that his framework is sufficiently flexible and universal to support the analysis of questions of race in educational settings.

Ogbu, while making no reference to Bourdieu, propounds a 'cultural-ecological theory of minority school performance' which has distinct resonance with Bourdieuan concepts. In particular, his classification of the factors influencing school performance into those of 'the system' and 'culture/community forces' (Ogbu and Simons, 1998) could be considered as examples of the interrelated concepts of 'field' and 'habitus' and emphasises the importance of the interplay between the two:

'It is at the intersection of different ethnic communities' self-perceptions, aspirations, and the negotiation of power relations between the ethnic majority and ethnic minority communities, that academic and social aspects of 'success' and 'failure' are defined' (Bhatti, 2006).

Ogbu also offers useful indicators of the level of minorities' accommodation, and resistance, to education provided by 'the system'.

Other concepts, originated in the US but relevant to the complex interaction between a minoritized group such as the Pakistani-heritage community in Newminster and the dominant society, are introduced by Putnam (2000). He explores the application of 'social capital' in the context of US society. He developed a 'Social Capital Index', in which the biggest component is 'religious participation' and demonstrates a significant rank correlation between this index and the SAT (Standard Attainment Test) measures of educational attainment in the different States. Although appealing as an explanation of educational performance that does not simply reduce to affluence/poverty, there are significant drawbacks to Putnam's analysis in relation to the experience of British Muslims. First, although Putnam asserts that he uses the term 'Church membership' to cover all faiths, in practice he only records participation in Christian denominations and some Jewish organisations. More broadly, the measures used in the index are firmly rooted in the dominant, Western power structures. Secondly, whilst acknowledging that correlation does

not imply causation, he makes generalised claims on the assumption that it does. However, his concepts of 'bonding'; 'bridging' to groups beyond the existing network; and 'linking' to those in power and influence are relevant in the setting of Pakistani-heritage communities in the UK.

Modood (2004) demonstrates this relevance in his study of the 'over representation' of ethnic minorities in higher education in the UK. He is one of the very few authors in the literature on minority ethnic groups to investigate why some groups, including Pakistani-heritage students, achieve *positive* outcomes, in this case proportionately more places in HE than their white peers. Modood proposes the refined concept of 'ethnic capital' or 'cultural/social capital' incorporating familial adult/child relations, the transmission of aspirations, and reinforcement of attitudes and norms. This concept is further developed by Shah et al. (2010) to gain understanding of the educational aspirations of British Pakistanis. They suggest that Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital may be utilised to study groups whose level of achievement exceeds that predicted by their economic capital.

Analysis in practice

Having outlined the participatory approach to analysis and the analytical framework to be applied, it is important to explain how the process was carried out in practice (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008).

The initial discussions and interviews relating to the achievement data were transcribed fully, by hand, so that the process of allowing categories to emerge started during transcription. The focus of the analysis was on content rather than discourse (MacLure and Walker, 2003) because the emphasis of the study was on the ideas of the young people rather than their roles and inter-relationships. Through a process of reading and re-reading

the transcripts, I identified several preliminary areas of content in the discussions, for example, 'Religious, social and cultural factors' (Area 7). These were placed as headings on index sheets. I then re-read the transcripts several times, marking detailed codings in the scripts, for example, (7d) 'Visits to Pakistan in term-time'. At the same time, I recorded the coding on the index sheets with a note of the interview in which it occurred. (See Appendices (iv) and (v)). On each reading the codings and headings were revised and extended and comments cross-referenced to other headings. I acknowledge that in grounded theory the coding should be allocated first and then grouped into categories (Glaser and Strauss, 1999) to ensure that the categories arise from the data rather than data being 'fitted into' categories. The risk of the latter is a potential pitfall of the method as described above, but moderated by the process of constant revision and re-grouping. With the survey and subsequent interview transcripts, I started with denser coding and indexing, resisting the early identification of themes, as cautioned by Delamont, (2002). I used a less descriptive framework based on Bourdieu's concepts of the habitus of home and community; the field of the school; habitus transformation; and barriers to transformation. I also re-analyzed the earlier transcripts using this framework (Appendices (vi) and (vii)).

Coding the survey, although time-consuming, was much more straightforward because the comments consisted of responses to specific questions. As the survey form ran to 13 pages, the responses were mainly, although by no means all, brief comments. For each question an index sheet was created and a list of codings built up and revised as I read through the responses. Typically, a question such as: 'What do you think is the main reason why some people do well in getting results at GCSE but others don't?' (q 18.4) generated 20-30 codings plus 30 or more responses coded 'Y' or 'Q'. These codes denote responses that were, in my judgement, extended responses that could not be readily summarised, or atypical comments, or responses that I did not understand. They were transcribed in full,

treated in the same way as interview transcripts, and discussed with the young people or the peer-researchers (See Appendices (viii),(ix),(xi)). At the end of the process the coded response to each question was entered on a spreadsheet against that respondent's numerical identifier.

Considerations of validity, reliability and bias

Having outlined the types of data and the processes of data collection and analysis used in this study, it is necessary to acknowledge the potential sources of bias that is inevitably introduced when collecting, selecting and interpreting data.

The positivist concept of validity, that test results reflect what they claim to measure, can be applied to the numerical data in this study. Where appropriate, I tested the statistical significance of relationships between sets of data, and confidence intervals. Within the qualitative paradigm the concept is much broader, encompassing the 'honesty, depth, richness and scope' of the data (Cohen et al., 2000) and can only be evaluated relatively, in terms of measures to improve validity and to mitigate the effects of bias. Hammersley (2007) suggests the concept of 'plausibility' of claims in relation to existing 'knowledge', and 'credibility'. Assessment of the latter involves examining the process by which claims were produced and this is addressed below in relation to interviewing and researcher bias. Reliability, in the traditional sense of replicability, is less relevant to a case study. The consideration of whether participants would have provided the same evidence to a different researcher and whether s/he would have interpreted it in the same way, is included in the discussion below.

Researcher Bias

'Our voices as researchers remain dominant, even when it is the respondents who are speaking' (Vincent and Warren, (2005). The nature of the bias inherent in the adopted research stance is discussed above under the section on critical stance. My interpretation of data will inevitably be coloured by my own cultural background and by my assumptions about that of the participants. From my professional background in Racial Equality work, and my reading of other authors, may arise the tendency to see only that which I expect to find.

Strategies for Reducing Bias

The main strategies for improving validity in this study may be summarised as triangulation, reflexivity, and the activity of explaining the work to different audiences. One strength of using mixed methods and a range of data sources is the opportunity to engage in triangulation in order to demonstrate current validity. Claims and explanations offered by participants may be reinforced, or challenged, by evidence from the survey or contextual data.

Many authors agree that the key to addressing researcher bias is through reflexivity and insight into the way that one's own background and standpoint influences decisions and interpretations throughout the research process. I tried to develop this practice as the research progressed, through the use of the reflective diary and discussions with critical friends.

The third strategy, that has proved invaluable for highlighting assumptions, alternative interpretations, and raising further questions, is explaining the research and preliminary findings to a range of audiences and receiving feedback. These include co-workers at the

Racial Equality Council, members of the Muslim Community Reference Group, and teaching colleagues involved in staff development. Most importantly, my two peer researchers provided vital commentary on potential sources of cultural bias, and critical discussion of my assumptions and claims.

Summary

In this study of the influences upon the progress of Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster I have taken, and maintain, a declared partisan stance, by prioritizing the voices of a minoritized group. I contend this stance is more realistic and intellectually faithful, for this case study in the field of racial (in)equality, than to aim for academic neutrality. The control of the agenda and the question of emancipation is problematic territory, but the aim is to further social justice. To this end, the participants are involved as fully as possible in the research process, including some data collection and analysis, and in regular discussion of results. The nature of 'truth' that the study aims to produce is knowledge of the local historical, organisational and social structures, that will contribute to practice that exposes and confronts inequality, and challenges stereotypes. For this purpose the conceptual framework of Bourdieu provides a range of analytical tools for examining the mechanisms at work within 'the system' and 'the community' to reproduce existing orders, or perhaps to be transformed by those within them.

Chapter 4

Data collected

Introduction

In this chapter the data are presented, having been selected and initially analysed according to the processes discussed in Chapter 3. The statistical data are presented first because they formed the context and the focus for the discussions with the participants. The main body of data follows, taken largely from discussions with the participants and placed in context using extracts from the young peoples' survey and the research diaries.

Measures and categories used in the study

In any exploration of relative educational attainment, the measures of 'success' are problematic. First, because standardised measures of attainment may be racially biased (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). Secondly, the fact that measures and categories of ethnicity change over time renders longitudinal comparisons difficult. In this study, the standard of 5A*- C GCSE grades is used as the main measure of attainment, because this allows progress to be charted over 12 years. As Gillborn (2008) indicates, merely recording 'improvements' over 2-3 years can be misleading and open to political manipulation. Data are also shown for more recent cohorts achieving the post-2008 standard of 5A*- C including English and Maths,

The ethnic categories are those in the local authority PLASC data derived from parents' declaration of their child's ethnicity. In Newminster, the designations 'Pakistani', 'Indian' and 'White British' have been applied reasonably consistently over the 10-year period (REC records). The 2011 Census data, supported by local reports (Akhtar, 2003) and the young people's survey, show that over 95% of British Pakistanis are Muslims. The designation 'Black' includes different groups whose proportions have changed from year

to year; 'White European', included in the data since 2005, represents a diverse, changing, and rapidly growing school population in Newminster.

The use of FSM as an indicator of socio-economic status is acknowledged to be a crude measure of deprivation, (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000) but is the indicator used in Local Authority data. Its shortcomings, as participants see them, are discussed in ‘The young people’s explanation of the statistical data’ in Chapter 5.

Local results

Note that the charts below show data up to 2010 because these were the data discussed with the participants in the study. Updated versions of Charts 5 and 7 (to 2012) are given in Appendix (ii). Background data for the Local Authority are given in Appendix (i).

Chart 5: GCSE attainment by ethnicity 2005-10 using Local Authority data

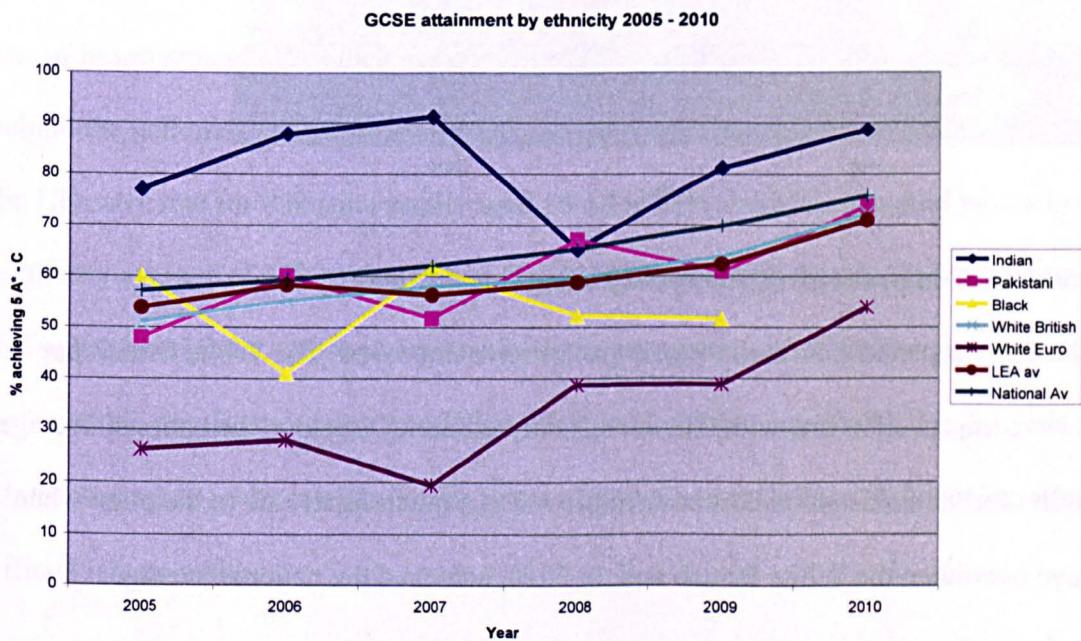


Chart 5 shows the GCSE achievement rates of the main ethnic groups in Newminster from 2005 to 2010, in comparison with Local Authority and national averages. In three years (2006, 2008 and 2010) the Pakistani pupils achieved a higher success rate than all other

groups apart from the Indian. They also out-performed the Pakistani cohort nationally on these occasions (DfE data, 2010). Over the 6 year period, the achievement rate of Pakistani pupils has increased by 25%. During this period the national average rose by approximately 18%, and the Local Authority average did not keep up with this rate of improvement, being 3.3% below the national average in 2005 and 4.7% below in 2010. The relative improvement over 12 years by the Pakistani cohort is even more marked, as indicated in Chart 6.

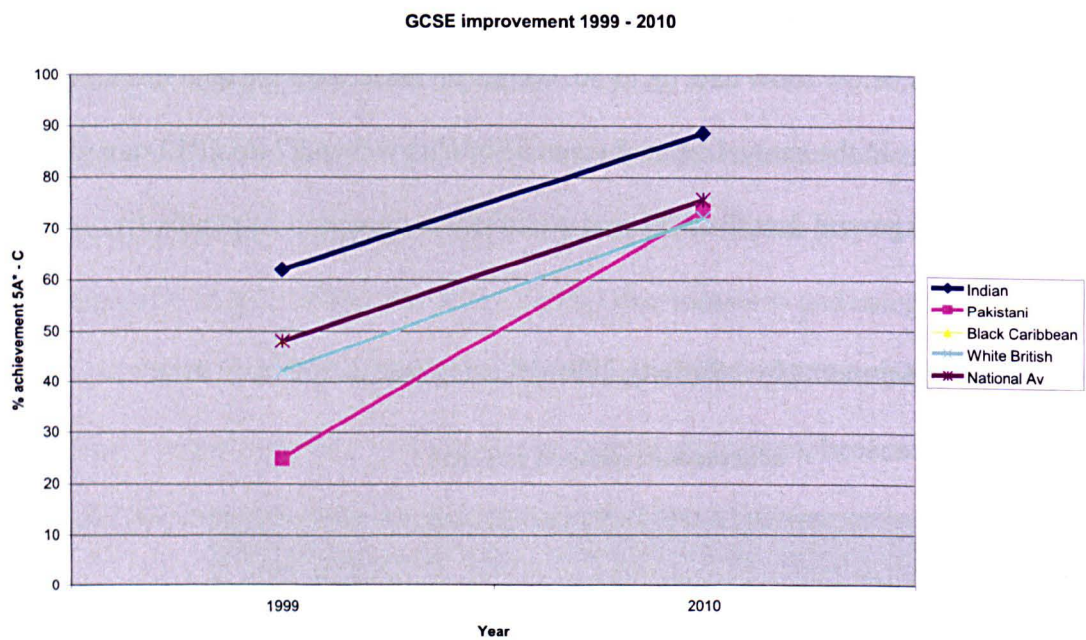


Chart 6: GCSE improvement 1999 -2010 using Local Authority data

Over the 12 year period the results for all groups have improved. The White British pupils’ results have improved in line with, but consistently around 5% below, the national average. The results for the Pakistani cohort have improved at a much faster rate to the point where they have overtaken the White British and, in 2010, achieved the national average.

With the more recent measure of 5A*- C including English and Maths (see discussion above) the picture changes dramatically.

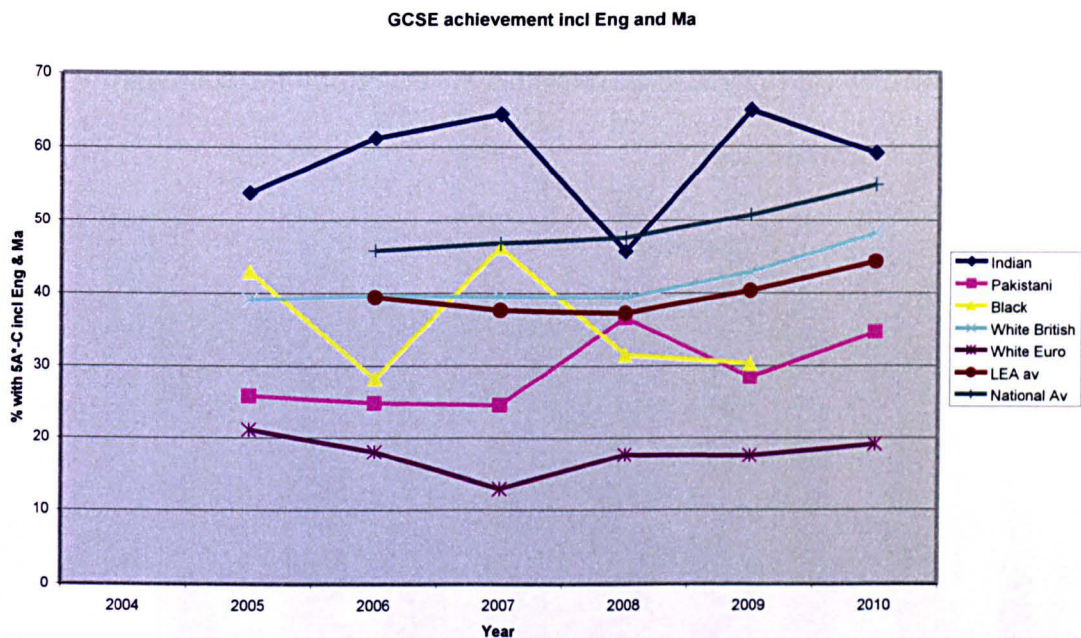


Chart 7: GCSE achievement including Eng and Maths using Local Authority data

(Data up to 2012 is shown in Appendix (ii))

Newminster pupils overall are more than 10% below the national average in 2010 and the Pakistani cohort 20% below. However, for the five-year period for which national data are available on this measure, the Pakistani pupils' progress has slightly exceeded the national rate of improvement (10% increase compared to 9%) whereas the local results lag further behind the national average than they were in 2006 (5% increase compared to 9%). Also, the HE entry rate for Pakistani pupils aged 18-19 is 38% in 2010 compared with a Local Authority average of 32% (AimHigher data 2010), suggesting that the poorer achievement in English and Maths, although serious from the perspective of school league tables, did not preclude pupils from entry into HE at 18. It is likely that any shortfall in English or Maths was made up by retakes during years 12 and 13 or at College, data not included in official league tables.

Analysis in relation to FSM data

There is well documented research (as discussed in Chapter 2) that attainment is strongly associated with social class, both when measured by eligibility for FSM and when more

detailed characterisation of socio-economics status is available. The Newminster Local Authority data, tested by chi squared tests, show that the factor of FSM is strongly associated with GCSE achievement.

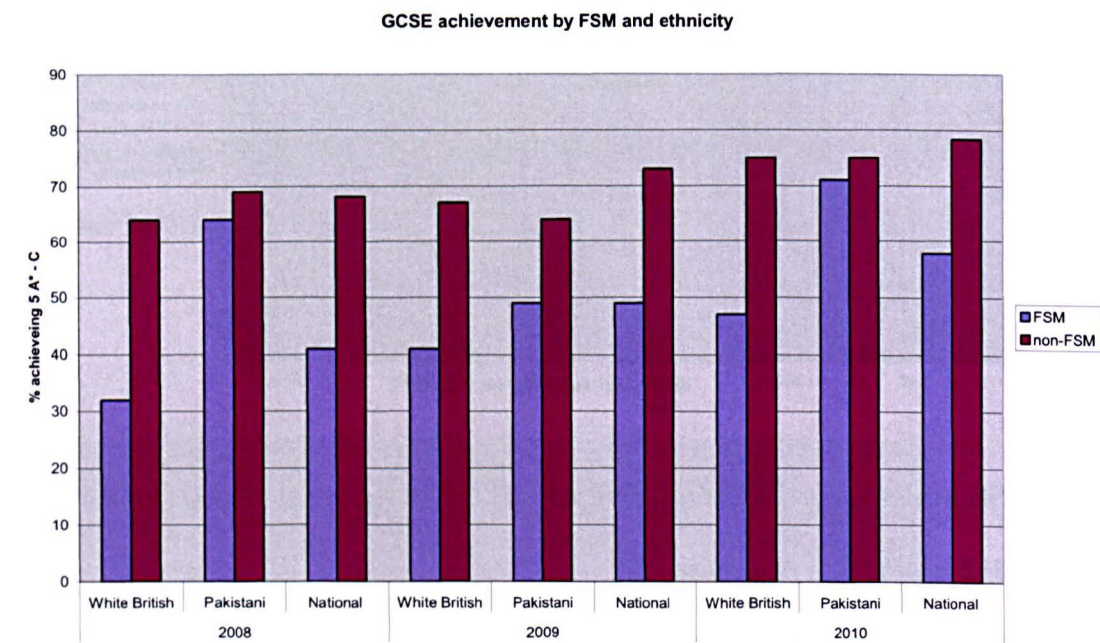


Chart 8: GCSE achievement by FSM using Local Authority data and DfE data (2010)

This association is illustrated by the 'White British' columns on Chart8 above, which show that in Newminster the White British pupils not eligible for FSM achieved 25-30 percentage points higher than their FSM peers in each year from 2008 to 2010. The 'National' columns show a similar gap nationally, although the gap decreases to around 20% in 2010. However, the Pakistani cohort presents a very different picture. For Pakistani pupils in Newminster the 'achievement gap' between FSM and non-FSM pupils is below 15% in all 3 years, and in 2008 and 2010 the difference is less than 5%. Indeed, in 2008 and 2010 the Pakistani FSM pupils perform as well as, or nearly as well as, White British non-FSM pupils.

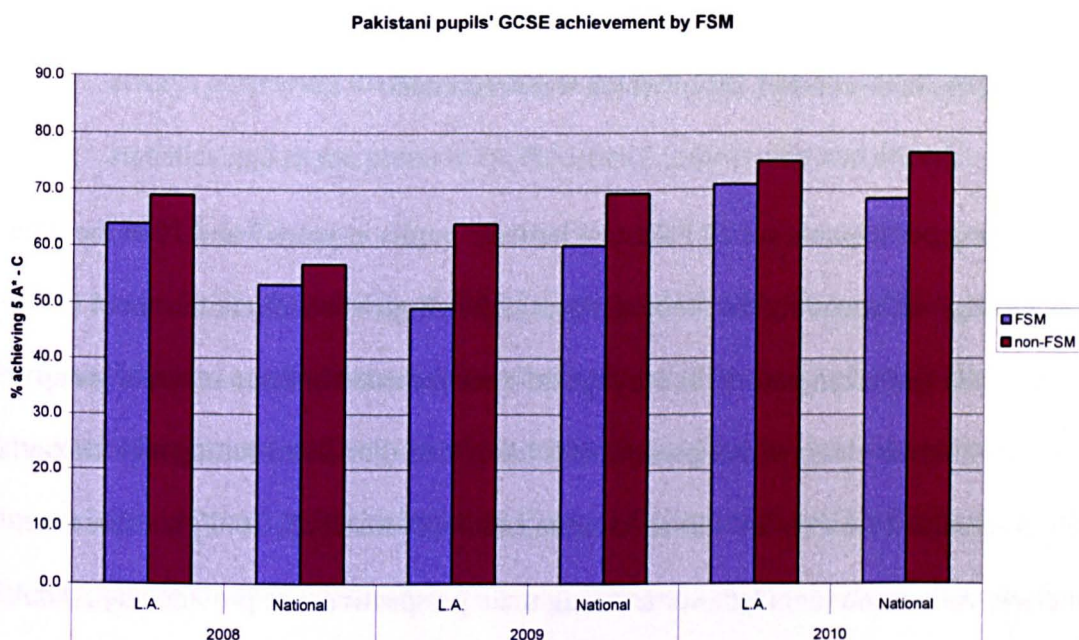


Chart 9: Pakistani pupils' achievement by FSM using Local Authority and DfE data (2010)

Chart 9 shows the data for Pakistani pupils nationally alongside those for the Newminster Local Authority. It is clear that the small differences between the achievement of FSM and non-FSM Pakistani pupils in Newminster is repeated nationally, although in both 2008 and 2010 the Newminster Pakistani pupils eligible for FSM outperform their peers nationally.

The data from discussions, interview and survey

The participants

The key participants are six young people (two female, four male) of Pakistani heritage from Newminster who, at the time of the Initial Study, had recently taken GCSEs. Subsequently, Faiza and Haris have completed Sixth form courses and Faiza has progressed to University; Abid is a youth worker, Haniya is employed locally, and Shahzad and Isa are looking for work. During the period of the research, Haris, Abid, Faiza, and Haniya were involved in conducting a survey of BME young people in local schools, the results of which they presented to me for analysis (discussed more fully in Chapter 3). Another key informant is Thayer, who had attended school in Newminster and was at University during the period of the research. He returned during the holidays to

teach in a mosque-based literacy and numeracy support project that I co-ordinated. We spent many hours in discussion, six of which were recorded.

The other young participants are 20 Pakistani heritage pupils in years 9 and 10 at the time of the recordings, all attending the Noor Academy, the all-girls Islamic faith school in Newminster. All had taken part in the survey and were recorded in three separate group discussions with their class teacher present. It is likely that the school setting and teacher's presence constrained their contributions to some extent (Curtis et al., 2004) but these are, nevertheless, valued and included. Some young male perspectives are provided by Abdul, Jamal and Qasim, who had recently taken GCSEs and are continuing in Further Education. They were recorded at the madrassah class in the mosque. The adult participants are Adeela, the leader of the young people's group, who monitors incidents of racism that they report; Ayesha and Safeen, who are parents, Sofia, a parent/teacher, and my peer researchers, Hameeda and Zahid, introduced in Chapter 3.0020

In the sections below, the participants described how their 'habitus', acquired from home, 'community' and mosque, shapes their approach to the field of education and school. They also provide accounts of the clash between habitus and field, and their experiences of stereotyping and racism. Later sections explore their views of the need (selectively) to transform their habitus, and the ways in which they perceive this transformation to be occurring. The concepts drawn from Bourdieu's analytical framework are explained in Chapter 3.

The 'habitus' of family and 'community'

The first theme for analysis was prompted by the young people's discussion of local attainment data (see Charts 5 - 9). Abid expressed what appeared to be a shared view:

‘I’m a bit shocked, to be honest with you, like education wise, ‘cos the media is always portraying that they’re not as good at stuff like education, but seeing these statistics makes me proud to be Pakistani.’ (others clap and cheer).

(Abid 5-1-11)

Abid is himself a youth worker and therefore particularly conscious of how young people from the Pakistani community are generally represented in the local press. His surprise is typical of other groups and individuals to whom the attainment data were presented.

(Imams’ Group 26-1-10, Racial Equality Council Education Working Group 17-8-10, Racial Equality Council conference 29-3-11.). The young people echoed this astonishment at the charts, and then offered their explanations of the trends shown by the data for Pakistani-heritage pupils:

Haris: ‘To be honest with you, I’d love to share the secret [of Pakistani educational success] but you can’t, it’s upbringing, it’s culture, it’s values... (others agree) ... which a lot of my White friends, even my Indian friends at school, don’t have as much as we would.’

Shahzad: ‘We still fear our parents’ (others: ‘yeah’) ...

Haris: ‘I don’t think it’s anything that you can share or implement with anyone, ‘cos it’s ...’

Shahzad: ‘It’s like parenting and everything.’

Haris: ‘It’s hundreds of years of tradition.’

(Young people 5-1-11)

As a result of this discussion, the participants steered the investigation to consider the influence of their inherited cultural values upon their experience of education. The blend of factors identified by Haris and Shahzad, and echoed by many of the survey respondents, indicate their own sense of habitus generated by the family and the wider community.

For the Pakistani-heritage participants in Newminster, the family is typically a large, interactive organism:

‘The whole reason why Asians, the subcontinent families, have such huge families is because the majority of their cultural workings come from being together as a huge family.’ (Thayer, 17-9-11)

Thayer, like other commentators such as Masood (2011), locates the extended family within a ‘clan’ and the ‘clan’ within the community, but it is difficult, and probably fruitless, to attempt to delineate these areas of influence. The extent of ‘the community’ was rarely defined; sometimes it was the local Beechton neighbourhood, sometimes the Pakistani-heritage community, or the Muslim community in Newminster, or the wider ‘Ummah’. Thayer portrays this ambiguity:

‘...I’m from the same background, but ... to be honest, I’m just representing what Mirpuris [say] - the Azad Kashmiris on a national scale comes under Pakistanis in the stats, I think the cultural communities are so small and minute that they end up tipping everything this or that way ... it’s like holding onto a river going downstream.’ (Thayer, 7-9-11)

Thayer’s concern about whom he is speaking *for* (Fielding, 2004) reflects a methodological dilemma for the study discussed in Chapter 3. He hints at a sense of restriction by the ‘small cultural communities’:

‘What I have found with many Pakistanis, personally, is that they still have this... tribalistic mentality, y’know, we’ll only look after our own – they’ll say things like ‘we are all one Ummah’, that is all one community, until they start saying, y’know, we want to marry your daughters.’ (Thayer, 7-9-11)

Thayer observes that in some circumstances the understanding of community is the brotherhood and sisterhood of all Muslims, but that when it comes to matters such as marriage, for Pakistani-heritage Muslims the requirements of the 'clan' system or 'Biraderi' predominate.

The survey responses of Pakistani-heritage pupils also indicated their identification with a shared heritage. To the open question: 'What do you have in common with your parents' generation?' the most frequently given responses were 'Culture/customs'; 'Religion'; 'Values/morals'; and 'Tradition'. These responses suggest aspects of social reproduction (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Similarly, Adeela talks about an 'ethos ... that comes from the generations' (21-12-11) and Thayer asserts:

'I think what it is, is that kids are genuinely 'doppelgangers' of their parents' values most of the time, and it's very much the same for all the Mirpuris because it's so close-knit that anything that goes beyond the norm is, er, stamped out very quickly, be it at the mosques or in the area.' (Thayer 7-9-11)

Thayer describes a Bourdieuan sense of social reproduction, 'kids are 'doppelgangers' of their parents' values', and also the mechanism that he feels controls any departure from the accepted 'norm' and hence perpetuates values from one generation to the next.

With particular reference to education:

'One of the main reasons is the family upbringing, because a lot of Pakistani communities, Asians in general, although I think Pakistanis in particular, have a lot of emphasis on education and stuff because many of our parents who have come from Pakistan, a lot of them have been taxi drivers, working in restaurants, working in manufacturing... so there's a big emphasis placed on we don't want

our children going through the same sort of thing, so a massive effort in education.’ (Haris, 5-1-11)

Haris explains that the sense of habitus, illustrated above, incorporates an understanding of the extrinsic value of education in liberating children from the forms of employment that their migrant parents had to accept. Another aspect of habitus, described by both young people and parents, was the culture of respect for parents and teachers:

Haniya: ‘It’s like in the Pakistani culture there is a big sort of tradition, to respect your teachers (others: yeah).

Faiza: ‘And I think, teachers, all staff, are like...’

Abid (interrupting): ‘cos it’s like the worst thing, if your teacher rings home, or something – it’s the biggest thing.’ (Young people 5-1-11)

Adeela: ‘We’ve always had, culturally, teachers are the same as parents in terms of respect and how you respect your teachers and how you respect your parents, they are held in high esteem.’ (Adeela, 21-12-11)

The young people’s discussions indicates that many of them felt that their respect for parents and teachers meant that they were under pressure to achieve in education:

Haris: ‘I think that with the Pakistani community, there’s a streak of competitive, like, nature amongst us, we wanna do better than the next person and the community itself harbours that it’s like he’s a doctor, he’s a lawyer, she’s running her like business, they all need to find pockets, because the thing is it’s not only your name that will go further, it’s the family.’

Haniya: ‘They won’t say ‘Haris’, they’ll say his dad’s name.’

Faiza: ‘They’ll say ‘so-and-so’s son.’ (Young people, 19-7-12)

Thayer describes his own parents' reaction on A-level results day:

'My parents were *so* pleased, you know it was the first time, they said finally someone in our family might be going to Uni.' (Thayer, 7-9-11)

Whilst presenting a narrative of their parents' desire for them to achieve in education to uphold family honour, the young people struggled to explain how such expectations became internalised:

Haniya: 'And it really grows on you, doesn't it?'

Haris: 'If you're going to do it, you're going to do it for yourself.'

Faiza: 'And you are not going to do it for *us*.'

Haris: 'For *us*, that's the other thing – you've got to do it for *yourself*.'

(Young people 19-7-12)

On another occasion, discussing differences in the quality of teaching at different schools, Haris asserts:

'I don't think this [attainment data] is about the standard of teaching, though ... I think it's down to our own aspirations.' (Haris, 5-1-11)

The theme of personal motivation, 'doing it for yourself', was developed in the survey results and the discussion of their analysis with the young people and peer researchers. Referring to the responses to: 'How can people get the best possible results?' (Appendix (xiii)), Haris pointed out that the biggest difference between the Pakistani-heritage pupils' responses and those of other ethnicities was that all of the former had offered some opinion, whereas over a quarter of the others had left the answer blank:

Haris: 'at least they [Pakistani-heritage pupils] had a view, an informed view – (laughing) we're opinionated!'

Faiza: 'Very opinionated' (looking at Haris).

(Young people 19-7-12)

Haris seems to suggest that the Pakistani-heritage respondents felt they *ought* to know how to get good results. The significant majority of all respondents cited strategies to do with personal effort, such as ‘revising, working harder, making sacrifices’ (Survey 127).

Responses in this category were given by 77% of Pakistani-heritage respondents and 70% of their peers. However, the responses relating specifically to motivation such as ‘Make a life ladder’ (Survey 4) and ‘Have better role models’ (Survey 33) were given mainly by Pakistani-heritage pupils (10%, compared to 2.5% of their peers). When I challenged the young people with the fact that most pupils, irrespective of ethnicity, appeared to know what to do to get good results, they argued:

‘The thing is, everybody knows that, but that is like, it’s *embedded* within us – like when we were younger, your parents would always say, like, if you work hard you’ll go far.’ (Haris 19-7-12)

Here, Haris claims that whilst other pupils are aware of *how* they should act to gain good results, his Pakistani-heritage peers were impelled by an internalised motivation.

As part of the emphasis on personal effort, the pupils were motivated to seek and utilise additional support with school work. When asked what would help to improve GCSE results, the Noor pupils responded:

Ruqqaya: I think that they should have an extra tutor in, like a club, for people who are not so advanced and stuff.

Tahira: ... and booster sessions (others: yeah, yeah). (Noor pupils 6-12-11)

Discussing their own GCSE preparation, the young people volunteered:

Isa: I used to go to [community-based] homework club.

Adeela: That’s one of the issues, community...

Haris: I think that links into the tuition and stuff, extra help...

AD: (addressing Faiza and Shahzad) did you two [attend homework club]?

Faiza: I used to, yeah.

Shahzad: DT, yes, I stayed till nine.

AD: And did it help?

Shahzad: Yeah - of course it helped.

AD: Well, could that have been a difference between you and probably the average white kid? (Some agree, some disagree).

Shahzad: No, they [the homework classes] were usually mixed.

Isa: I think that's bullshit, I used to go to the IT room, it was full of Pakistanis.

The young people disagreed amongst themselves about whether the school-based homework club was used more by Pakistani-heritage pupils than by others. Isa's recollection that the IT room was 'full of Pakistanis' could indicate that these pupils were particularly motivated to avail themselves of extra help, or, alternatively, that they preferred to use the IT facilities available in the school environment. In the survey, a somewhat higher proportion of Pakistani-heritage pupils than other BME pupils cited extra tuition and homework clubs as the way to improve results (11% compared to 7.5%).

Religion

When discussing the young people's motivation to study it is difficult to distil the influence absorbed from the mosque and madrassah. As Haris explains:

'It's because our culture comes from our religion ... the same values of

respecting your parents, respecting your elders, and education.' (Haris, 5-1-11)

Haris' assertion, strongly reinforced by the peer researchers, indicates that in Newminster it would be impossible, in practice, to isolate the accounts of habitus generated by the

family from that shaped by religion. In the survey, all the (83) Pakistani-heritage respondents identified their religion as Islam and all but two describe themselves as practising their faith on a regular basis. In relation to education, Haris explained:

‘The religious importance of acquiring education, so, not only for us is going to school, like – sort of a compulsory thing – but the Prophet (PBUH) said that you have to seek knowledge from cradle to grave.’ (Haris, 19-7-12)

From a parental perspective, Adeela agreed:

‘From a faith-based culture, education is important... there’s a prominent saying where they say the lap of the mother is the first school for a child – in other words, a mother needs to be articulate and educated to teach a child.’ (Adeela, 21-12-11)

In these and similar extracts, several of the participants and peer researchers are careful to explain to me, a non-Muslim, that their motivation to pursue education is not mere self-interest, or filial duty – it is a religious obligation.

The religious dimension of the pupils’ motivation was reinforced by the teaching strategies at the madrassah. One Imam explained that when a child learns to pronounce certain letters in Arabic, he is rewarded both by the teacher *and* by Allah, who gives 10 ‘spiritual rewards’ for the achievement. However, a child who is a ‘slow learner’ may be unable to achieve the exact pronunciation, but he will be rewarded as well, for his effort, and his spiritual reward is doubled (Imam madrassah teacher, 15-7-10).

These accounts indicate how the teaching in mosque and madrassah reinforced both the importance of educational endeavour and the individual responsibility for achievement.

Gender

The young people's discussion of motivation for study was interwoven with issues of gender, as well as cultural and religious heritage. The Noor pupils grappled with the complexities involved in explaining why (statistically) girls achieve better results than boys:

Sabriya: 'Is it because ... girls are more likely to do writing, that's what most think in class they normally do, naturally – boys are more, I dunno, outdoorsy and practical, they prefer that, but, in some ways, people have just adapted to that so much, parents, like, they'd encourage the daughter ... but with the boy, they'd be, like, he's just a boy, he's not going to do that well, he'll probably just grow up and carry on the father's business.'

Saiqa: 'It's the boys themselves, they don't want to learn, they want to go outside, girls are all, like, they want to learn and look good, but boys just want to go outside because they're not into education.' (Noor pupils 6-12-11)

This discussion must be placed in its context, that of a group of girls with a female researcher in a single-sex school. However, most of the factors they suggest are echoed in the survey and by the (mixed) young people's group. The idea that girls are better at 'writing' subjects, whereas boys are naturally suited to 'practical' subjects and sports was raised in several discussions without any contestation. One survey respondent asserted that school is a 'better environment for girls, boys learn differently.' (Survey 147). The boys' preference for being 'outdoorsy' was reiterated. 'Boys always out, girls stay in and revise' (survey 128) was a typical statement from Pakistani-heritage respondents, which reflects the different social spaces appropriated by young Muslims (Bhatti, 1999; Gilliat-Ray, 2010).

Parental encouragement of daughters, as noted by Sabriya, was also raised by the young people:

Isa: I tell you another reason why the stats have improved, because a lot of Asian girls are doing the Asian boys' courseworks for them (general laughter).

Faiza: They don't do the exams for you though, do they? ...

Shahzad: Talking of girls and boys, in 1999 [referring to Chart 1] I don't know how much focus there would have been on parents encouraging girls to get educated, whereas now ...

Haris: ... now girls and boys are treated the same.

Abid: Girls achieve better.

Shahzad: They are expected to achieve as well, whereas before they might not have, families might not have...

(Young people, 5-1-11)

Shahzad proposes that the changing attitudes of parents towards the education of daughters, who are now expected to complete GCSEs and progress to Further and Higher Education, could be a reason why the results of Pakistani-heritage pupils had improved over the previous decade. Sabriya's comment suggests that carrying on the father's business is now seen as a lower expectation for the boy who is 'not going to do that well'. The theme of pupils aspiring to careers of higher status than their parents' is pursued below under habitus transformation.

The need to look good, or 'cool' in front of peers, as explained by Saiqa, was also a common theme in the survey. 'Less stigma attached to doing well' [for girls] (Survey 75) suggests that girls can be successful in school without losing face in front of their peers, whereas boys cannot. One female respondent sympathized with the dilemma that this could present for boys: 'Boys pretend to be hard, and not care, but they actually do' (Survey 25).

These extracts acknowledge some aspects of the intersection of gender with home culture and youth culture in relation to school, as raised by the young participants. They did not develop these discussions any further, so the issue of gender is not a main focus of this study, but it could well be the basis for a future investigation. A much more detailed exploration of issues noted here is offered by Bhatti (1999), by Archer (2003) in her discussion of race and masculinity for Muslim boys, and in Shain's (2003) study of the schooling and identity of Asian girls.

The perceived need for habitus transformation

For the adult participants, the strong cultural and religious support for education was undermined by some parents' lack of confidence, or willingness, to engage with the 'host' society in order to get the best for their children, educationally and socially. Hameeda compared her own learning in an ethnically mixed primary school with that of her pupils at the Noor Academy who had previously attended an all-Pakistani primary school:

'I remember when we were in the playground with lots of English children, we'd be picking up words like 'tea' – you know, what is tea, tea is different in the English community and the Asian community ... but if you've got 99% Asian children within the classes or within the playground, then there is no difference of thinking in these matters ... the thinking pattern is similar, there's no variety, there's no imagination, there's no room for that because there's no contact with these outer communities.' (Hameeda 9-12-10)

Hameeda illustrated the effect of her pupils' limited encounter with 'these outer communities' with a description of the school trip to London:

'I was so shocked, because at the train station before we left, the girls were literally holding onto my skirt: 'Oh, Miss, I've never sat on the train,' and I was

like ‘Oh my God,’ ... I was quite embarrassed ... that you had to coax these girls to sit on the train.’ (Hameeda, 9-12-10)

Hameeda is conscious of the dissonance between her belief in the educational benefit of exposure to ‘other ways of thinking’ and her position teaching at an all-girls Muslim faith school. She tries to broaden their horizons through her own teaching and influence on the school’s extra-curricular programme. In the three years that the school has been open she has seen a significant increase in the girls’ confidence in extra-mural situations, such as their independent participation in a conference on the results of the survey. Such observations legitimize, for her, the decision to work ‘from within’. (Hameeda 15-2-13)

Hameeda’s accounts illustrate a dilemma that arose in several parental accounts between the benefits and dangers of exposing children to the experiences of ‘these outer communities.’ A further barrier for parents was explained by Thayer:

Thayer: ‘... a lot of the time parents have, y’know, their main concern is their children’s school education most of the time, but they don’t really want to get into the nuances of things – my Dad still barely understands the GCSE/A level system.’

AD: ‘Do they feel unwelcome at the school?’

Thayer: ‘There’s not that many chances for the parents to visit the teachers, except for disciplinary action.’

AD: ‘But if there were, would they?’

Thayer: ‘I think they would, because my Dad understands it vaguely but at the same time it’s because of how many subjects there are, he gets confused.’ (Thayer, 17-9-11)

Thayer indicates his father's mixed feelings about approaching the school, in spite of his interest in education. Adeela related several incidents where parents had been unwilling to challenge the school for similar reasons:

'I think sometimes schools will take advantage of the fact that parents ... do not have the confidence – they usually know how to speak the language, it's the confidence – of coming in and challenging the school.' (Adeela, 21-12-11)

Adeela rejects any suggestion that parents' lack of engagement with the school might stem from language difficulties. She sees their reluctance arising from their uncertainty about their own standing in relation to the school.

The school – a foreign field?

The extracts above indicate some parents' apprehension about approaching the school.

This section focuses on the participants' accounts of their encounters with the field of the school. The table below indicates the survey responses of Pakistani-heritage pupils and their BME peers to questions about school.

Table 2 Survey responses relating to school experience

Question	Pakistani-heritage pupils	Other BME pupils
Do you or did you enjoy school? Y/N	Y = 78%	Y=80%
How do you rate your treatment by school staff? 1= excellent 5= very poor	Average rating 2.49	Average 2.44

In both groups a significant majority said that they had enjoyed school, and there is very little difference in their perceptions of treatment by staff. There are no comparative data for White British pupils so it is only possible to conclude that Pakistani-heritage pupils, like their BME peers, gave a range of ratings with an average of 'middling'. The importance of

the pupil-teacher relationship was raised at an early stage by the Noor pupils when discussing how the school could help to improve GCSE results:

Ameena: (tentative and softly spoken) 'It's the teachers, teaching –'

Hameeda: 'You want to improve the style of teaching?'

Ameena: 'Yes – I want to feel *comfortable* as a student ... I want to, to interact with people.'

At this point in the recording all the other pupils fall (unusually) silent as Ameena struggles to express herself. Then they crowd in to explain that they want 'a comfortable atmosphere where you feel free to ask away' (Sabriya) and that teachers should teach in 'a way that the student is comfortable with, a way that they can understand' (Sajjida) (Noor pupils 6-12-11).

The Noor girls' comments raise a further question – do they feel more comfortable in a school environment where all but one of their teachers share their heritage? Adeela and Faiza made this point strongly in separate discussions:

Adeela: 'Teaching – this is another major thing in terms of role models, there's not enough BME teachers in schools to be role models to young people, this is a real major influence, teachers are always white – what do they know about us?' (Adeela, 21-12-11)

Faiza (who left school in 2010): 'When I was at school, there were not many, like, Asian teachers at all, and I think that that motivates the students because you see an Asian tutor and you look up to them, y'know, role models and stuff, but now, there's loads of teachers, like, I know people have become teachers, and they're teaching kids and stuff like that, and I think that's what motivates them.'
(Faiza, 5-1-11)

Local Authority data for secondary schools show only a very small number of Pakistani-heritage teachers, although the Muslim community is well represented among teaching assistants and at the Noor Academy. It is possible that these constitute the ‘loads of teachers’ that Faiza knows, an interpretation that was subsequently confirmed by Adeela (21-12-11). However, the advantages of co-ethnic teachers asserted by Faiza are not confirmed by the Noor pupils’ views of role models on the survey. When asked ‘who is your role model if you have one?’, only two of the Noor pupils stated ‘my teacher’ although this was by far the most popular category for the other respondents. More of the Noor pupils designated ‘the Prophet’ or ‘my friend’ as their role model.

The madrassah pupils raised wider issues about the school environment when describing the effects of the transition from their previous secondary school (which closed) to Eastminster Academy.

Jamal: ‘When we went to Eastminster ... it was quite different, y’know, when the lessons changed [to] one hour, and all the rules changed and everything, it was like changed from what I was used to before and I found it easy to concentrate, and then when I went to Eastminster I found it quite hard,’ (others agree) ... I couldn’t concentrate and you just get off track –’

Qasim: ‘... cos say if you asked for help, that they’d help [at previous school], but at Eastminster, you – there’s too many people.’

Jamal: ‘...in bigger schools, you find it quite hard to concentrate, and so you can’t do nothing about it.’

(Madrassah pupils 14-3-12).

Both groups of pupils highlight the importance of the school and classroom environment in determining whether they felt able to concentrate and to ask for help. Jamal and Qasim

convey a sense of disempowerment that the new school 'system' will inevitably thwart their attempts to learn.

Other discussions with pupils and young people about school returned to the importance of personal motivation and personal effort, reinforcing the themes emerging from home and community in the first section. This discourse resonates with the ethos of 'competitive individualism' (Fielding, 2004) of modern schooling. The young people described how they find both motivation and constraint in their habitus. They are 'circumscribed by an internalised framework that makes some possibilities inconceivable, others improbable and a limited range acceptable' (Reay, 2004, p.435; Ball et al, 1999). The next section will explore their accounts of the process and possibility of transformation of their habitus – and what it costs them.

Habitus in Transformation

The sense of a process of habitus transformation arose from the young people's discussion:

'Many of our parents who have come from Pakistan, a lot of them have been taxi drivers, working in restaurants, working in manufacturing, sort of manual labour, so they don't want – there's a big emphasis placed on, we don't want our children going through the same sort of thing, so a massive effort in education.' (Haris 5-1-11)

Haris links the extrinsic motivation for education, discussed above, to parental aspirations for their children. The young participants expressed their own expectations in more materialistic terms:

Adeela: 'If you think about other generations, our parents were happy living in terraces, and not having a car – we're different, we want to live in semis'

Shahzad: ‘You always want a big house, you always want big cars, you always want a good job.’

Abid: ‘You want to have a decent life generally.’

Faiza: ‘Yeah.’

Isa: ‘We want better ... we don’t want just a decent life, we want a good life, we want a *luxury* life (laughter).’

(Young people 5-1-11)

The young people’s expectations of a better lifestyle than their parents’ are echoed by many of the survey respondents. When asked: ‘What differences do you have from your parents’ generation?, a typical response was: ‘We’re more outgoing, we expect more in life and have higher expectations due to where we live.’ (Survey 38)

The reference to having higher expectations as a result of living in the UK, echoes the records of other migrant communities (for instance, Archer and Francis, 2007). Adeela explains:

‘I think you’ll also find that Pakistanis, well not all of them but most of them, they’ve always come here for a purpose, it’s always been we’re grafters, we’ve worked to earn money, and our parents generation as well ... it’s about changing our lifestyle, and I think we’ve now [realized] – you’ve got to sort of work within the education system, go on and achieve and maybe you can change your lifestyle.’ (Adeela, 5-1-11)

Migration to the UK is portrayed as offering opportunities for a better lifestyle for those who are prepared to work hard, particularly through education. Her own career exemplifies the process of transformation through education that Adeela describes:

‘I went to University in 1999 and I remember I was probably one of the first few people who went from this city from a Pakistani background, and ... it was the

fact that education was free, we were getting Local Authority grants.’ (Adeela 5-1-11)

Adeela prescribes a combination of factors for achieving a changed lifestyle; the tradition of being ‘grafters’, of learning to ‘work within the education system’, and the opportunity offered by, what was then, free Higher Education.

Whilst the first factor was widely endorsed by the survey respondents and the Noor pupils, the third is no longer available, and only a proportion of parents and pupils are able to negotiate the hurdles of the education system:

‘I know some [mates] who didn’t even get anything at all, who hated College and now they’re doing menial jobs, they are honourable jobs because ... we still need people who are working in restaurants and takeaways and people who are working in the streets but there’s this real cynicism, which I think is understandable, among the Asians themselves ‘Oh, we’re not going to get there anyway’.’ (Thayer, 7-9-11)

Thayer is at pains to acknowledge that ‘menial’, low paid jobs are still ‘honourable’ jobs because they make a contribution to the community, but that they will not lead to the changed lifestyle desired by his peers, resulting in disillusion. He attributes his own educational progress (see ‘Thayer’s Story’, below) in part to his engagement with the education system but particularly to his cross-cultural friendships and ways of thinking, developing what Putnam (2000) describes as ‘bridging’ social capital.

Bridging activities

Several survey respondents identified ‘language, Western influence, education’ (Survey 144), and being ‘more in touch with society’ (Survey 61), as differences between themselves and their parents’ generation. Hameeda and Adeela both articulated the

advantages of such engagement with [English] society for Pakistani-heritage young people growing up in Newminster. Hameeda recalled her own experience as one of the very small number of Asian children at a local primary school in the 1980s:

‘These ideas that we’d picked up were through knowing different people in the school playground, and then different thoughts came, and different viewpoints, and within the class we’d learn about Christmas and Easter, and then we’d talk about Eid ...’

‘You know your own idea, your own way of thinking is not necessarily the correct way, in any community, until you’re subjected to different ideas and different environments – it’s a learning process, isn’t it?’ (Hameeda 9-12-10)

‘From my perspective, I just think in this day and age, again we really need to come together and allow, *expose* our young people – ’cos this is a generational thing, the attitudinal change with the generational shift, if we start, sort of, preaching ... understanding and tolerance with the young generation, they’ll grow up, hopefully they’ll be far better than their parents were.’ (Adeela 21-12-11)

Hameeda explains the benefits of ‘bridging’ activities from an educational perspective. Her comments, set alongside her observations in the previous section about the limited thinking patterns of her current pupils, indicate that the process of habitus transformation can go backwards as well as forwards. Adeela has broader aspirations for the process of integrating young people from different communities which she hopes will create a more tolerant society. However, her use of the phrase ‘*expose* our young people’ suggests that she is conscious of the risks as well as the benefits of the process.

The costs of transformation

Several parents' accounts conveyed a dilemma between the perceived advantages and dangers of exposing their children to the experiences of what Hameeda called 'these outer communities'. As a parent herself, she described her own process of agonising over her daughter's participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award residential weekend.

'She's never been away from home, she'll be in an environment where we won't be able to go in and see how it is, and then there'll be boys and they'll be girls, and we took about two or three weeks thinking what we should do, and then we had a couple of neighbours knocking on the door saying, y'know, 'if you send your daughter, Asian, we'll send ours as well' – which was 'Oh, my God,' y'know, added pressure ... so we spoke to quite a few people and we dwelt on it, and then I had a conversation [with my daughter] and said, 'Well, okay, I trust you, and don't break my trust.'" (Hameeda 9-12-10)

The outcome was that Hameeda allowed her daughter to attend the weekend, as did the other parents who followed her lead, and discovered that the event and sleeping arrangements were well supervised by teachers acting 'in loco parentis'. She reported that now (only a couple of years later) there are 'many Asian boys and girls' doing the Award.

This narrative illustrates the importance of the cultural 'bridge builder' and the general trend of parental attitudes changing within one generation, but also the dilemmas involved. The possibility of corruption feared by the parents in Hameeda's account was related to a more general concern about 'dilution' of the culture. This issue was raised by the young people when discussing the attainment data showing a recent downturn in GCSE achievement by their Indian peers.

Faiza: 'Is that because the Indians are now third-generation, and their culture is becoming more diluted?' ...

Adeela: 'I personally think that we'll follow that path because I think they are becoming more diluted from their culture to that whole ethos of respecting your teacher, respecting the education system, it's now 'I want to do my independence first, I want to do my own thing', it's what we're seeing now in today's generation, I think about my own kids, if I tell them to grow up to be a doctor, they'll go 'whatever!', and choose to do 'whatever!'; whereas, my dad said 'I'm going to be a lawyer', so that's exactly what I was, there's no two ways about it, whereas my children won't do that. I think we're giving them more choice as parents, so we'll probably go with the Indians.'

The young people then focus specifically on an aspect of their culture that they had discussed earlier, their own respect for their parents:

Shahzad: 'If you think your parents are wrong, you should not speak up.'

Isa: 'I don't know about you lot, but he used to do (laughter).'

Haniya: 'Our cultures are not diluted.'

Shahzad: 'Not yet.'

Isa: 'It will be, it will be.' (Young people 5-1-11)

In a much longer discussion, the young people speculate that in future generations their culture will inevitably be diluted, just as they think this has already happened in the Indian community. A specific consequence of this, they believe, will be that the culture of respect for parents and teachers will be eroded, and that their GCSE results will go down 'with the Indians.'

Interestingly, they maintain that the process of cultural dilution is *not* happening with them, despite their materialistic aspirations declared earlier. Shahzad and Haris both assert 'we still fear our parents' and the others all agree. This group of Pakistani-heritage young

people claim to embody the traditions of the old world whilst appropriating the opportunities of the new. In many ways so does Thayer, but his story also provides an insight into the personal costs of the process.

Thayer's Story

Thayer's story is not representative of the accounts of the other young participants. It is included here because it challenges their narrative of habitus transformation and my own thinking.

Thayer's father came to the UK from Mirpur at the age of 14 and left secondary school early. Thayer reflected:

'I'm not going to say that the system broke him down but it was the other way round – he did say that there was lots of racism at the time.'

Thayer hated his own early years at secondary school:

'As soon as I came into my first class in Year 7, y'know, I started experiencing a lot of bullying from people of my own kind – that was how I thought of it at the time, *my own kind*, segregation – at least the segregation isn't as bad [in Newminster] as it is in other cities, but it's still quite terrible in that Pakistanis are told, subconsciously, not to mix in with people of other races ... You have these parents here, Pakistanis, telling their kids 'Oh, don't hang around with the White people – they'll corrupt you.'

Although some parents in the community were warning their children not to mix with their English peers, Thayer ignored this advice:

'... by the time I was in Year 9, I started hanging around with all the English, y'know, the English students, because I slowly started getting more interested in English language, in humanities and stuff like that ... I started hanging around

with mates, who finally started seeing me, not because of *what* I was, but because of *who* I was, and then the Asians started, y’know, I was walking on very thin ice ... for example, y’know, the big area [at school], people used to stand around and stuff, when I used to see the Asians walking past, I used to hide so that they wouldn’t see me.’

Thayer makes a connection between his acceptance by English friends and his growing interest in English-based subjects, and chose to study Performing Arts at GCSE:

‘Yeah, Performing Arts – I think that’s the one thing that saved me, I have to say it was in Year 10 or 11 and I was completely in tears, I used to just walk around and I used to hate the lessons – [but with creative/expressive options] I kind of left myself behind and did all the courses I wanted to do finally, because there was no one there to watch or mock me, so I finally got comfortable.’

Thayer recalls being encouraged by certain teachers:

‘Mr F., y’know, he’s telling me that, y’know, ‘you need to hold on’, as in, ‘you need to start acting – act out everything which is going on in your head’ and Mr I. said, ‘you’re a funny writer.’

They also supported his case for entry to the Sixth Form at the newly-opened Northminster School despite having only achieved 4 A-C grades at GCSE. Thayer was accepted to study 3 Arts A-levels including Performing Arts:

‘Y’know, I was the only Pakistani boy in Northminster in my year doing A- level ... and the results day came, and I got 2 As and a B. All my teachers were so surprised, ‘Oh – you’re going to Uni!’

The transition to University brought a new, internal conflict for Thayer:

‘I then thought about myself, ‘why am I doing Drama?’ – now that I’ve learnt about my religion and how I should be away from the opposite sex. And, y’know,

I was still a bit conflicted, beard was finally slowly coming out by the time I'd finished [school] ... what am I supposed to do, now that I know I can't do Drama any more? – acting was probably what helped me gain my self-confidence, what gave me a voice, it's what helped me start writing poetry and prose and stuff, and, er, I finally thought, you know, it's fulfilled its purpose, but I don't want to pursue it as a career ... and I also find the majority of Muslim performers are pretty crap to be honest – um, I think they're so desperate to try and fit in that they'll try and compromise on our religion for the sake of it.'

He resolved the dilemma by changing course from Drama to Creative Writing at University:

'... and yet I feel stigmatised because all I want to be is just a teacher, I want to teach linguistics, and I want to write a few stories, I want to write a film ... y'know, I want to be able to use what I've learnt in my Creative Arts back to the community, and be able to push myself creatively.'

Thayer's experiences within Higher Education have continued to interact with his developing understanding of Islam:

'When I came to Uni ... I started realising how our religion is not just based on blindly following any man from the Masjid ... I started learning about my religion by seeing it, and by example, and reading the texts myself, I wasn't – I think Arts subjects generally give you that thirst for knowledge, only not just for being fed logic, you are being taught about research methodology.'

Adopting a critical approach from his studies at University has led to further conflict for Thayer in Newminster:

‘Unfortunately, what the Muslims here do is that they just swallow all that information [from the masjids], don’t even question it at all, and because of what I’ve been told, ‘if you don’t like it here why don’t you just get out and go back [to Uni],’ but I’m sorry, I live here ... I can’t even talk openly to my fellow communities and my families ‘cos they would just label me, instead of engaging in discourse.’

Thayer explains at length about his attempts to share his developing understanding of his faith with his home community, and the opposition and rejection that has followed. He reflects upon the broader implications for young people in Newminster:

‘It’s mainly to do with, because there’s very few youth, my year, who have ended up ‘breaking the mould’ – if you understand me – so that cycle keeps going and going ‘cos the main thing about, I’d say for sub-continent Asians, is that they have a reputation to uphold all the time, and anything which is beyond the norm will be avoided for the sake of looking, I dunno, acceptable in the society ... I think the youth are really being pulled from one side to the other, like they’re being pulled by tradition and at the same time they want to hold onto their religion.’ (Thayer, 7-9-11 and 17-9-11)

For Thayer, the costs of transforming his habitus, of ‘breaking the mould’, have been painful and persistent. He has suffered bullying from ‘my own kind’, and disapproval from some of their parents, for socialising with English friends. He feels stigmatised because of his choice of non-traditional subjects and career, ‘all I want to be is just a teacher’. He has agonised over his relationship with Performing Arts which had at one point ‘saved me’ but also required him to engage in practices which he felt were forbidden by his religion, such as having physical contact with the opposite sex. Finally, through his University studies he has acquired critical, post modernist ways of thinking and ‘research methodology’ with

which he has interrogated the teachings of the ‘man from the masjid’ in Newminster. He has survived this process by decoupling the teachings of ‘tradition’, which can be criticised, from the authentic sources of his religion, which cannot. Although this resolution has protected him intellectually and spiritually, it has resulted in separation and rejection from the mosques in Newminster:

‘I am still feeling uncomfortable there, okay – I go there, pray, walk out; I don’t want to cause arguments.’ (Thayer 7-9-11)

A further consequence is his feeling that he is unable to talk openly within his family and the local Pakistani-heritage community.

The young people portray a dichotomy between their traditions, which they see rooted within their religion, and Westernization, which they believe will inevitably bring about a dilution of their culture. Thayer sees a tripartite relationship where religious teaching from primary sources is sacrosanct, but aspects of both traditional and Western culture may be adopted or rejected by reference to the ‘authentic narrations’ [specific Arabic sources] of Islam.

Barriers to transformation

Thayer’s story and the dilemmas for parents reported by Hameeda, illustrate some of the personal costs and challenges encountered by the young people in their process of habitus transformation. The final section is devoted to the participants’ accounts of barriers presented by the structures of the school field and the wider educational system that still thwart their aspirations.

The parent-participants shared wider issues about the school 'system' and whether the school offered an environment in which their children could flourish. Adeela was concerned about admissions:

'The feeling within BME, I'm sort of speaking for the Beechton area, is that most of the young people are ending up in the Northminster – now for all the sort of schools in terms of achievement, it's probably the worst, in terms of behavioural issues, in terms of academic achievement ... Then there's this resentment that we're not getting into Eastminster Academy, we're not getting into Westminster High, Deansgate is just off the radar, you're not going to get in there unless you have friends in higher places ... Eastminster Academy's probably one of the hardest schools [to gain admission], so that all of them end up in Northminster, and the thing is, when you keep all trouble together in one school, you're gonna actually end up creating more trouble – you can have decent good kids going in there, but well-behaved children can come out at the other side probably 10 steps back from where they were.' (Adeela, 21-12-11)

Adeela claims to be speaking for the (predominantly Pakistani) Beechton area and, as a community representative on several local forums, she is well placed to do so. Her views are representative of several other parents interviewed. She expresses their feelings of marginalization and exclusion from the 'better' schools in terms of behaviour and academic achievement. Eastminster Academy and Northminster are both new schools created during a secondary education reorganisation in which five previous schools, four deemed to be 'failing', were closed. Eastminster is within walking distance of the Beechton area and Adeela is correct in asserting that, because of the way the catchment areas were initially designated, many of the children from Beechton were allocated to Northminster, approximately 3 miles away. (Local Authority Admissions data).

In terms of academic achievement, her fears are not wholly corroborated by the attainment data. In 2012, Northminster's success rate for pupils achieving five A*- C grades including English and Maths was 4% *higher* than that of Eastminster Academy (although this is still almost 20% below the national average – Local Authority data, 2013). Given the relatively better performance of Pakistani-heritage pupils discussed in the section above on 'Local Results', the higher proportion of these pupils in Northminster may, in fact, have contributed to the school's achievement.

Preclusion by prediction

Whilst all the parents interviewed were keen to promote their children's academic achievement, several expressed anger about the restricted options offered to them for GCSE on the basis of *predicted* attainment (Safeen, 20-1-11, Ayesha, 20-12-11, Noor head teacher 3-8-10). Abdul, at the madrassah, gives his own account:

Abdul: 'When I came to start off Eastminster was my GCSE first year, and I did my last year at [previous school, which closed], 'cos I was then put into Foundation maths when I was at home, I knew I couldn't get higher than a C'.

AD: 'So why was that, why did they say you could only do Foundation?'

Abdul: ' 'cos in year 9 when I was at [former school], I had my operation, so at that time they had the exams for classes we would be put into, for the next year, and obviously that affected me, so I got put into Foundation Maths ... I found it really easy, I got my C, 'cos I'm stronger at maths.' (Abdul, 14-3-12)

Abdul expressed his frustration that the setting system at Eastminster had determined, when he was in year 9, that his GCSE achievement in maths, one of his strongest subjects, would be capped at C grade and subsequently limit his subject choice in the Sixth Form.

Safeen explained how her daughter, also at Eastminster, had been refused her choice of GCSE history in year 9, because her predicted grade was too low. Following an unsuccessful appeal to the School, Safeen moved her daughter to another (Local Authority) school where she was allowed to study History for GCSE, gained an A* grade and proceeded to A-level (Safeen, 20-2-11). Both Safeen and Abdul felt that low expectations by teachers, coupled with a rigid system of predicting grades (based on prior attainment and pupil characteristics), were limiting pupils' potential. Furthermore, Hameeda observed that, in her children's school:

'My son, he's in the top set of the year where mostly, he's only got one, one other Asian in the class, which is a female, and the rest are sort of English, and this is his maths and science set – in his English he's in set 2 and he's got a couple of Asian friends ... but if you go down the sets you've got more similar ethnic origin groups...' (Hameeda, 13-4-12)

Hameeda's son attends Eastminster Academy where pupils are allocated in year 7 to one band for maths and science, and another for English and humanities, on the basis of their Key Stage 2 results. The school's intake includes about 30% Pakistani-heritage pupils, but Hameeda notes that very few of them in her son's year are placed in the higher sets, and they predominate in the lower sets. Ayeesha voiced a more general frustration with the system of target-setting and monitoring:

'I actually feel really disappointed that education seems to have gone backwards – I don't feel that my child is nurtured at school, I think my child has to be a statistic for the government, so my child's abilities are being crushed, so that he can meet these certain boxes ... I don't want a school-approved child, I want *my* child.' (Ayeesha, 20-12-11)

Such accounts suggest that these parents, whilst strongly supportive of their children's education, are conscious of a structure that frustrates their aspirations.

During discussions, students and parents recounted similar narratives that could provide evidence of structural inequalities or institutional racism. In contrast, incidents of direct racial abuse were very rarely reported. Whilst the lack of these could be influenced by the researcher's whiteness, the survey, conducted by Pakistani-heritage young people, showed similar results. When asked why some people get good results and others don't, only two respondents alluded to 'colour' (Survey 62) and 'rubbish racist teachers' (Survey 153). In Thayer's view:

'I think racism amongst teachers was gone, by then [when he was at secondary school] from what I see, because, all right, there were one or two cases but I don't think they were as bad as it was exaggerated, whereas a lot of the time, a lot of the teachers I think it was just incompetence.' (Thayer, 7-9-11)

There were, however, several accounts of stereotyping by white teachers, which Thayer may have included in his judgement of 'incompetence'. He reported his commendation by a teacher:

'So, Mr F. told me, 'y'know, you seem like a creative lad – y'know, you seem enthusiastic, you don't seem like your typical Asian boy.' (Thayer, 7-9-11)

Both Haris and Adeela, on separate occasions, recounted two incidents that had recently occurred at the school where Haris was in the Sixth Form. On one occasion, all the *Asian* boys were told to go to the hall:

'So they went into the hall, and two Chinese lads went in with them – *Asians* – so they went to the door and got turned away and [they] said 'No, you don't need to

come in, we want the Pakistani lads' – and when they went in they were told ... 'there's been incidents round the school where the teachers have been intimidated by young Asians hanging around in gangs – so we're now going to say that you can't hang around in gangs of over three' ... I said to them, 'well, what did you do? Did you challenge, did you tell your parents?' [And they said] 'What's the point?' They just put up with it, and I was so shocked by it, I said, 'y'know what guys, sometimes we're our own worst enemies.' But I do understand, apart from the fact that they'd label me as a troublemaker and say you've got a big gob and you are causing all this issue.' (Adeela, 21-12-11)

Adeela's outrage at the school's discriminatory treatment was compounded by the fact that Haris and his friends felt unable to challenge the restriction on their normal socialisation during break times, for fear of repercussions. The second incident took place on a Geography field trip to visit different areas of Newminster:

'They were coming into Beechton [where many of the Pakistani heritage pupils lived] and the teacher said, 'We are going around the Beechton area today, and I'd remind you all to keep hold of all your bags and belongings' ... and that particular [Pakistani-heritage] young man, he didn't speak at the time, and afterwards he said to this teacher, 'Oh, Miss, I live there, it's not that bad.' (Adeela, 21-12-11).

Adeela's account highlights the stigmatization of the Pakistani-heritage community by some white teachers, alongside the pupil's reluctance to challenge such racial stereotypes. Against this background of externally constructed stereotypes and institutionally reproduced inequalities, the young people continue to draw motivation and aspiration from their habitus. In the next Chapter these findings are discussed and analysed.

Data from other sources.

The focus of the research question is on the explanations of their educational progress given by the Pakistani-heritage young people, and so most of the data presented are drawn from their discussions. However, to place their accounts in context some extracts from the Research Diaries are noted here. These extracts relate to discussions about the analysis of attainment data and the young people's survey which I had presented to different groups. The adult informants in these groups described a range of community-based and Local Authority initiatives that they believed had supported the progress of the cohort of young people in the study.

This cohort was the first generation to have access to 'SureStart' pre-school provision in the Beechton area (Councillor K., REC meeting, 17-8-10). The aim of the 'SureStart' provision was to support children's acquisition of English before entering Primary school. (R. Ali, 26-4-13). Following the recommendations of the Swann Report (1985), the County Multicultural Education Service and Newminster Multicultural Centre developed a range of initiatives to support the children of Pakistani-heritage and other migrants, funded by government 'Section 11' funding (see Chapter 2 'The policy context').

Specific initiatives that benefited the Pakistani-heritage young people in this study were the provision of bilingual teaching assistants in the two Beechton primary schools; teaching resources and staff development at the Multicultural Education Centre (Shilela, 2013); the appointment of teachers to teach Urdu as part of the mainstream curriculum in 6 out of the 11 secondary schools in Newminster; and the use of the Multicultural Education Centre for after-school Qur'anic classes before the building of the city's mosques:

‘We made sure if they were on our premises, they taught by our rules ... no child-beating and so on... we had to show [for the funding] that what we did moved towards integration, so you learn cultural identity for pluralistic integration.’

(R. Ali, former Multicultural Centre manager, 24-6-13).

The Local Education Authority (LEA) also monitored the progress of pupils in schools with significant numbers of minority ethnic pupils, identifying their needs and producing action plans (Shilela, 2013).

When the young people in the study cohort were preparing for GCSE, community-based homework clubs were offered in the Beechton area funded by the YMCA (youth worker, REC meeting, 17-8-10):

‘We made these opportunities open to children from all backgrounds, but it was only the [Pakistani-heritage] community that took them up. A lot of people at the time said we were going over the top.’ (former Mayor, Beechton ward councillor, 24-6-13).

The view that some of the provision for Pakistani-heritage pupils had 'gone over the top' was echoed in other meetings recorded in the Research Diary. At a council ESOL meeting where I represent the REC, I was told, 'Don't come asking for English classes for Asian women, your own results show they don't need them any more' (Cabinet member for Education, ESOL Delivery Board, 30-9-11). When I presented the results of the young people's survey at a conference in the Council chamber, my Diary records:

‘I was thrown by Councillor F., who asked what percentage of the city's young people had been consulted, because he couldn't do anything about policy unless *all* young people [in Newminster] had been consulted. I didn't know what to say, but [Adeela] gave a good response about the aim of the survey being specifically to gain the views of BME young people, and [Abid]... exploded at councillor F.,

saying the Council didn't care about young people or they wouldn't have withdrawn funding for the youth club [which Abid and Isa had been running in the Beechton Community Centre].’ (REC Conference, 3-12-12)

The excerpts above provide evidence of a number of initiatives that were available when the young people in the study were in pre-school, Primary and Secondary education. None of them is now available. The accounts also reflect the different attitudes of councillors and policymakers towards the principles of ‘equality in a multicultural society’ (Parekh, 1998).

Chapter 5

Discussion

‘That just shows you that, education, is education going to school or is education learning from what you understand?... there's so much pressure on the students, as well, that's why I don't blame stuff like this coming out (indicating some offensive comments on survey sheets).’

(Haris, 19-7-12 discussing the survey results)

Haris's observations above illustrate how the young people themselves struggled to explain the diverse influences upon their educational progress. It indicates the challenge of unravelling the ‘complex web of factors’ underlying the progress of the Pakistani-heritage pupils in this study, and echoes Abbas' finding that ‘many constituents act interdependently to make the educational experiences of South Asians multifaceted’ (Abbas, 2002. p.311).

The first part of this chapter considers what the Pakistani-heritage young people said, about the influences on their educational progress, in the light of the related literature and data from other sources presented at the end of chapter 4. The structure for this part of the chapter broadly follows the way in which the study developed. First, there is a consideration of what the young people themselves identified as the main influences on their progress. Secondly, in Bourdieuan terms, their exploration of their own habitus, together with how far they think it fits in with the field of the school. Thirdly, they speak of how they see their habitus being transformed and what they see as the barriers to that transformation. The summary of part one addresses how far the research question has been answered.

Part two of this chapter discusses how the research findings might have been affected by the research methodology. Particular attention is given to the interactions between the researcher and the participants, and the researcher's inevitable influence on the selection and interpretation of data.

Part one

The participants' explanation of the statistical data

The young people's first reaction to the data was one of surprise: 'I'm a bit shocked... 'cos the media is always portraying that they're [Pakistani-heritage pupils] not as good at stuff like education' (Abid, 5-1-11).

'... if you were to compare [Newminster] to cities which have similar *issues with their populations* such as Coventry, Leicester and Luton [places with large proportions of citizens of South Asian heritage] then actually we are doing okay.'
(Cabinet member for education, commenting on GCSE results, Newminster Telegraph 24-1-13, italics added)

Statements such as this in the local press reinforce Abid's impression of the media portrayal of his peers. Modood makes a similar observation to Abid's from academic literature:

'For many academics and educationalists ethnic minorities in Britain continue to be associated with educational underachievement rather than success. This is specially reinforced when it comes to Muslims' (Modood, 2010, p.69).

Isa argues in the ensuing discussion, that because:

'The Pakistani population are put down a bit, as low achievers, may be that spurs people on, you know, motivates you to go out and prove people wrong.'
(Isa, 5-1-11)

However, Isa's suggestion that pupils may be motivated to confound their teachers' expectations must be set against other evidence. Low expectations of minority-ethnic pupils by teachers can result in their over-representation in lower sets (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). This placement then limits their opportunities at GCSE and can limit their level of achievement (Ireson et al., 2005).

The second aspect of the statistical data that challenged expectations in the media and educational literature was the small 'achievement gap' between Pakistani-heritage pupils receiving FSM and those not eligible for FSM. However, findings relating to FSM were largely dismissed by the participants. The Chair of the Muslim Community Reference Group, told me that he had read my report but disagreed with the last section (on FSM) because this was 'irrelevant' (MCRG Chair, Parenting Conference, 18-4-10). The young people made light of the findings:

'I think the people that's on free school dinners, their families are actually the clever families (all laugh), they are getting free food for their children!' (Isa, 5-1-11)

Hameeda explained that FSM eligibility was not a good indicator of school achievement for Pakistani families because a family on a low income would not have as many outgoings as a comparable English family, from her observation of both communities. The former would not have to pay for childcare, which would be provided within the extended family, nor would they spend money on alcohol, cigarettes, 'going out', or holidays. Without such outgoings, a poor family would still be able to afford some home tuition, which was widely believed to boost children's attainment (Hameeda, 9-12-10). Whilst Hameeda is making a generalisation about both communities, her explanation of the inadequacy of FSM status or other measures of social class when accounting for the educational attainment of minority ethnic groups, supplements those of Archer and Francis (2007) and Modood (2004).

‘[C]lass analysis ... exacerbates rather than resolves the anomaly of why non-white ethnic minorities in Britain are over-represented in higher education’ (Modood, 2004, p.87).

EHRC (2010) and Archer and Francis (2007) single out the small gap between FSM and non-FSM Chinese pupils, who are the highest-performing group overall. The Newminster findings show that the results of Pakistani-heritage children are also relatively unaffected by FSM status. This is a significant factor in the current policy climate where, nationally, ‘educational attainment continues to be strongly associated with socio-economic background ... [and] the gap in attainment between ethnic groups has narrowed more clearly’ (EHRC, 2010). In taking such a view, there is a danger that the distinctive needs and achievements of minority groups, like the Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster, are overlooked (Gillborn, 2008a, 2010a). Of particular concern is the ending of any ring-fenced funding for pupils from minority-ethnic backgrounds (DfE, 2012) and the replacement of such funding by the ‘Pupil Premium’ which is only available to children who qualify for FSM (DfE, 2010c).

The influence of habitus on educational progress

In contrast with the low expectations of their community portrayed in the media and some educational literature, the young people argued that particular influences played a positive role in their educational progress:

‘It’s upbringing, it’s culture, it’s values ... it’s hundreds of years of tradition.’

(Haris, 5-1-11)

Haris explained the factors underpinning the rapid progress of Pakistani-heritage pupils in terms of the values and attitudes, the *dispositions* absorbed from family, community, and mosque, which are discussed in Chapter 4 as aspects of habitus. The young people, parents

and Noor pupils all concurred that the culture of respect for teachers and parents, and an understanding of the intrinsic value of education, are inculcated by their upbringing and religion. High educational aspirations were instilled in them by their parents, even when parental experience of education was limited. 'It was always pushed into us to say, go to Uni, work hard, and you'll achieve' (Adeela, 5-1-11). The speaker at a well attended Muslim Parenting Conference urged parents to 'develop your children's love of reading; have books available for them even if you cannot read yourself' (Tahir Alam, MCRG conference, 18-4-10). These values and aspirations are well documented in other studies of South Asian communities (Abbas, 2002a; Bhatti, 1999; Modood, 2004) and in the families of high-achieving British Chinese pupils (Archer and Francis, 2007). Importantly, such aspirations are not confined to a particular socio-economic class. They are shared across parental occupations (Bhatti, 1999; Archer and Francis, 2007). Strand (2008) suggests that factors relating to pupils' and parents' educational aspirations could explain the strong progress of some ethnic minority groups.

In Newminster, the young people argued that their disposition towards education inculcated by upbringing and culture could account for their rapid educational progress. It is reasonable to conclude that these influences, being largely independent of economic status, could also explain the small gap in achievement between FSM and non-FSM pupils of Pakistani heritage. It is acknowledged that such an explanation leaves other questions unresolved. In particular, why did their parents' generation, which shared the same habitus, attain much lower levels of success at GCSE? Further, why are their results different from those of Pakistani-heritage pupils elsewhere? These questions are considered later, under 'habitus transformation' and in the summary.

As the young people discuss their explanations of the Newminster results, they seem to be negotiating their own positive identities in relation to education (Shain, 2003). They *do* claim some distinctive advantages from their culture:

‘It’s values – which a lot of my white friends, even my Indian friends at school, don’t have as much as we would.’ (Haris, 5-1-11)

As noted above, they are conscious of negative stereotypes of their community and intend to challenge them. However, reporting their accounts incurs the risk of creating ‘negative positive’ stereotypes (Archer and Francis, 2007). The Chinese pupils in Archer and Francis’ study complained about teacher stereotypes of them as ‘quiet and diligent’. Gillborn (2008a) also warns of the danger of creating ‘model minorities’. He challenges the assumed relationship between ‘model cultures’ and high attainment on the grounds that such a relationship implies that groups that perform less well do not place a high value on education.

Importance of religion

A further distinctive influence identified by the participants is their religion. For Haris ‘our culture comes from our religion’ (Haris, 5-1-11). Unlike the young people, Thayer makes a clear distinction between values and practices that are rooted in ‘traditions’, and those that come from his religion. For him, the former are open to debate and criticism while the latter are ‘Islamically non-negotiable’ (Gilliat-Ray, 2010, p.113).

‘When it came to religion, I didn’t criticise the doctrines I was taught, ‘cos y’know I dislike the ‘oh, let’s try and fit our religion into society’ – I think that’s ridiculous.’ (Thayer, 7-9-11)

Zahid, one of my peer researchers, makes the same distinction between ‘tradition’ and ‘religion’ as Thayer. They echo Abbas, who also notes that ‘present day second-

generation South Asian Muslims (Bangladeshis and Pakistanis) are increasingly distinguishing their ethnic from their religious identities' (Abbas, 2002a, p.292). The changing construction of young peoples' identities as Muslims is a complex topic that is only touched on here (for further discussion, see Abbas, 2003; Archer, 2003; Gilleat-Ray, 2010; Bhatti, 2011). In Newminster, at the time of the study, it was focused by the recent EDL (English Defence League) march in the city:

'They [EDL] came and spoke wrong of others when we aim to bring peace.'

(Survey 25)

'cos the media, they do propaganda about Islam that says, like, Islam does this and that, and that's why people don't get along.' (Saiqa, Noor Academy, 6-12-11)

'They [EDL] should be restricted just like Muslims are.' (Survey 148)

These young respondents, like many others in the survey, expressed their frustration that the EDL, and the wider media, misrepresent Islam and thereby harm community relations. The third comment echoes a response to the rise of secularism in wider society, where freedom of speech is perceived to take precedence over respect for religion (Modood, 2010). Thayer's and Zahid's determination to represent the 'true Islam' is also partly a response to media representations (Shain, 2003). Abbas (2002) interprets such determination as 'Muslims re-evaluating their individual identity necessarily based on a return to a more literal Islam' (Abbas, 2002a, p.293). The data from this study indicate that the range of responses is much more varied in Newminster, than Abbas suggests. Nevertheless, for these young people, it appears that their identity as Muslims is more important to them than their identity as non-whites (Modood, 2010) and that their religious identities have a direct influence on their approach to education.

In relation to education, the participants conveyed 'the religious importance of acquiring education' (Haris, 19-7-12) which extends beyond self-interest. Thayer, in common with

the Pakistani young men in Bhatti's (1999) study, expresses frustration with some of the teachings and practices of the elders at the mosque, but he is careful to assert that his own religious beliefs 'really held me down and kept me sane', keeping him grounded through his troubled years at school (Thayer, 7-9-11). In contrast, the 'model minorities' described by Archer (2003) do not mention faith as a motivating factor. She cites the 'new differentiation between the higher-achieving Indian 'achievers' and lower-achieving Pakistani's/Bangladeshi 'believers' who are mostly Muslim' (p.36). The Muslim boys in her study, whilst demonstrating strong religious identities, held an instrumental view of education that they did not link to their faith. The evidence from the participants in Newminster indicates that their identification as Muslims is very significant to them, *and* a positive influence on their educational progress. It is, therefore, important to consider how far their culture and their religion are acknowledged, respected and valued, or marginalised within the field of the school (Bhatti, 2006).

The 'fit' between the habitus of Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster and the field of the school

'I want to feel *comfortable*, as a student.' (Ameena, 6-12-11)

The Noor pupils, the madrassah pupils, and Thayer, in separate discussions, stressed the need to feel 'comfortable' in the school environment in order to make progress (Noor pupils, 6-12-11; Madrassah pupils 14-3-12; Thayer 7-9-11). They explain the connection as needing a classroom environment where they feel 'able to ask away', and 'to interact with people'; in other words, to participate actively in learning. 'Feeling comfortable' is a reciprocal relationship resulting from the disposition of the pupil and the conditions in the environment. The first side of this relationship raises the question posed by Bourdieu (Maton, 2008) and Reay (2004): How has the pupils' habitus, as discussed above, enabled them to adapt 'comfortably' to the field of the school? I suggest that there are three aspects

of habitus that help the Newminster Pakistani-heritage pupils to feel ‘like a fish in water’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.127). First, is the well-documented factor, frequently voiced by the young people, of their positive dispositions towards schooling:

‘It’s not just about learning your religion, it’s about being educated.’

(Shahzad, 5-1-11)

‘There’s this big emphasis placed on we don’t want our children going through the same sort of thing, so a massive effort in education.’ (Haris, 5-1-11)

‘There’s this big sort of tradition, like, to respect your teachers.’ (Faiza, 5-1-11)

Their comments indicate a high intrinsic and instrumental value placed on education, high expectations by parents irrespective of socio-economic status, and an inculcated respect for teachers. Such attitudes in pupils invoke the ‘model minority’ stereotype and promote favourable responses from teachers (Bhatti, 1999; Archer and Francis, 2007). Several studies suggest that, for minority ethnic pupils, attitudinal factors have more influence on attainment than poverty and school effectiveness (Strand, 2007; Wilson et al., 2005). Secondly, although more contested, is the influence of pupils’ attendance at madrassah classes after school. In the survey, 93% of Pakistani Muslim respondents attended mosque at least once a week for Qur’anic classes. In Newminster, parent/teachers felt that the madrassah classes supported pupils’ mainstream education because of the disciplined environment ‘and probably the biggest thing it gives you is structure’ (Sophia, 15-11-10). Her comments support the findings of Williams and Gregory (2001), who note the respectful, disciplined teacher-pupil relationship gained from Qur’anic classes. The older boys at the madrassah in Newminster also felt that the supplementary classes were helpful in providing individual support that was not available at school where ‘there’s too many people’ (Qasim, 14-3-12). Qasim wanted to learn but felt more ‘comfortable’ about asking for help at the madrassah than at the school. For these pupils, the value of their attendance

at madrassah classes contrasts with Strand's (2007) findings that such attendance more than once a week has a negative impact on attainment.

The third, and perhaps most surprising area of consonance between the pupils' habitus and the school system, is the current ethos of 'competitive individualism' (Fielding, 2004). As Haris explains:

'We never blame anyone else; we blame ourselves.' (Haris, 19-7-12)

The Pakistani-heritage pupils are well habituated to being held accountable to parents, to family, and to higher authority. They are used to taking personal responsibility for progress, and for failure. They are conscious of the need to achieve goals for themselves and for family honour. Haris was commenting on the responses to the survey question: 'How can young people get the best possible results? Over three quarters of Pakistani-heritage respondents gave reasons that we had grouped as 'personal effort' or 'personal motivation'. When I challenged Haris that most pupils, of any background, would recognise that these factors should improve results, he responded:

'The thing is, everybody knows that, but, like, it's *embedded* within us.' [as Pakistani-heritage pupils] (Haris, 19-7-12)

Even the system of 'spiritual rewards' for learning Arabic letters at the madrassah described by one Imam, seems to reinforce the structure of competitive personal endeavour (Madrassah teacher, 15-7-10). Government policy and Ofsted (Demie and McLean, 2007; Ofsted, 2013a) promote strategies of setting finely graded individual targets for pupils whose progress is closely monitored against their targets, with regular testing and reporting to parents. Achievement of the target may result in a symbolic reward, and replacement with a higher target. Teaching strategies based on such relentless accountability are the subject of serious criticism (Apple, 2006), but they seem strangely well-matched by the habitus described by the Pakistani-heritage young people in Newminster.

Habitus in transformation

‘It is within the domain of education that new futures are formed while others are dismantled’ (Bhatti, 2006, p.134).

The aspects of habitus described by the young people above could explain the fact that ‘FSM is irrelevant’, as the MCRG Chair had asserted, for Pakistani-heritage pupils. Their values and traditions transcend the socio-economic differences between families. However, traditions and values alone do not explain why Haris’ generation has made so much progress when compared with their parents, who held the same traditions and values. Neither does it explain differences in results between Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster and their peers elsewhere.

The discussion in the previous section focused on the more enduring aspects of habitus; traditions, culture and religious faith which, like the bull of my pupil’s family, have been reproduced in some recognisable form over generations. It would be a misrepresentation of Bourdieu to portray habitus as unchanging or deterministic (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). A key question is: How are the young people involved as agents in the transformation of their own habitus? (Reay, 2004).

The participants and the Pakistani-heritage survey respondents described a range of processes by which their expectations are being transformed. Some relate to their drive to achieve a better lifestyle than their parents’, some to ‘bridging’ with the dominant culture, and one specifically to language. All have a potential impact upon their educational progress.

The aspiration to a better lifestyle in material terms, ‘you always want a big house, you always want big cars, you always want a good job’ (Shahzad, 5-1-11), provides a strong

extrinsic motivation for progress to Further and Higher Education. 'You've got to sort of work within the education system, go on and achieve and maybe you can change your lifestyle' (Adeela, 5-1-11). This motivation among British Asians to work for a better lifestyle than the previous generation is well documented elsewhere (Modood, 2004; Bhatti, 1999; Ijaz and Abbas, 2010). Shahzad comments that expectations for girls, in particular, have changed in his generation: 'they [girls] are expected to achieve, whereas before, ... families might not have' (Shahzad, 5-1-11). As Shahzad suggests, the raised expectations of girls could have made a significant contribution to the overall progress in attainment of the Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster and merits further exploration. Ijaz and Abbas (2010), in their study of the attitudes of South Asian Muslim parents, found that parental attitudes towards their daughters' education had changed between the 'first' and 'second' generations.

It is acknowledged that an important engine in the process of habitus transformation is the acquisition of English language, but in Newminster the participants rarely mention it. Shahzad refers to the fact that 'English is now half of our first language' (Shahzad, 5-1-11) but he does not mean that he is only partially competent in English. As with many of the survey participants, he has *two* first languages. Thayer mentions the need for translation of school and Council documents for his parents, but he has worked his own transformation in this aspect of habitus and is currently (2013) writing a dissertation on linguistics. For Thayer and his peers in Newminster, their 'linguistic capital' (Yosso, 2005) is now an asset, not a deficit, in educational terms. This aspect is explored in detail by other authors (Gregory and Williams, 2000; Williams and Gregory, 2001).

As Thayer acknowledges, for him a significant part of 'breaking the mould' was through extending his social network to include his English friends and their interests: 'I started

hanging around with all the English, y'know, the English students, because I slowly started getting more interested in English language, in humanities and stuff like that' (Thayer, 7-9-11). Putnam (2000) and Modood (2004) would describe these 'acquisitions' as part of 'bridging' social capital, but it is argued here that the *process* of bridging is a key part of habitus transformation. Bourdieu uses habitus 'as a method for uncovering actors' relationships to dominant culture' (Reay, 1995). Hameeda's accounts of her own experiences of bridging both as a child and as a parent have convinced her of their educational value: 'These ideas that we'd picked up were through knowing different people in the school playground, and then different thoughts would come' (Hameeda, 9-12-10). As a teacher she is working to expand the 'thinking patterns' of her own pupils through exposure to 'these outer communities'. Thayer's comment that 'at least the segregation isn't as bad [in Newminster] as it is in other cities' (Thayer, 7-9-11) indicates that he values the contact that he has been able to make with 'these outer communities' in Newminster.

I suggest that the *level* of habitus transformation and bridging described by the Pakistani-heritage participants in Newminster may account for their rapid progress relative to their parents' generation, and could be a factor that differentiates the experiences of Pakistani-heritage communities in different areas. The performance of bridging, and habitus transformation in general, is not a one-way process either for an individual or a community. It is risky, costly, and may result in retreat.

The costs of transformation

Hameeda's description of her agonising over whether to allow her daughter to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh residential, illustrates the dilemma for parents between their

habituated desire to protect their daughters and their equally strong motivation to promote educational opportunities:

‘If you send your daughter ... we’ll send ours as well’ – which was ‘Oh my God!’ y’know, added pressure.’ (Hameeda 9-12-10).

Bhatti (1999) records similar anxieties among the parents in her study. Parents also felt the painful tension between the advantages of ‘bridging’ with Western society, and the weakening of traditional values that would result:

‘Many South Asian parents find it impossible to accept that the price they must pay for economic betterment through migration must come at the cost of the loss of deeply held values’ (Bhatti, 2006, p.138).

In Newminster the young people shared a sense of regret at the seemingly inevitable ‘dilution’ of their culture:

Abid: ‘Two generations time, when we don’t fear our parents, then ...’

Isa: ‘Then it would be different, because that’s what’s gonnna happen.’

(Isa and Abid, 5-1-11)

The young people clearly value their culture and claim that it is not being diluted in their own generation (Haniya, 5-1-11). Nevertheless, they appear to feel unable to prevent the eroding of values in future generations. Thayer, in contrast, admits to abandoning practices that are based on tradition rather than religion; ‘I abandoned them in secret’ (Thayer, 17-9-11). At a personal level, Thayer suffered from rejection and bullying by ‘my own kind’ who disapproved of his ‘bridging’ activities. His greatest struggle, however, was in the arena of his religious convictions. He is engaged, with many of his brother Muslims in Newminster, in ‘an effort to determine what is Islamically ‘non-negotiable’, while also establishing what may be legitimately subject to change in the light of new circumstances (Gilliat-Ray, 2010, p.113). For him, and for his brothers and sisters, the ‘choices inscribed

in habitus (Reay 1995, p.118)' are also circumscribed by higher authority. Yet he believes that he can negotiate this particular crossing:

'If a Muslim wants to do well in British society he has to engage with the community and he can still be a man of principles.' (Thayer, 17-9-11)

Barriers to Transformation

As noted earlier, 'feeling comfortable' in the school environment is a reciprocal relationship. The Pakistani-heritage pupils describe a habitus that fits well, in many ways, to the field of the school but the school may still thwart their aspirations. Bourdieu warns that: 'Schools are not simply places where individuals prove their innate worth but a mechanism by which elites are perpetuated and transformed' (Grenfell, 2004, p.51). How the participants perceive the potentially exclusionary mechanism within the structure of the school system is considered below.

Thayer, his peers and their parents, have had to negotiate many internal constraints upon their habitus transformation. The field of the school also presents many obstacles to their progress, both individual and structural. At the individual level, in the young people's discussion there was almost no reference to direct racist abuse in the school environment, although there were a number of accounts of racial stereotyping by teachers. The omission of the former could be attributed to the participants' unease about discussing racism with a white researcher (Archer, 2002); however, in the survey administered by their Pakistani-heritage peers, only two respondents mentioned 'rubbish racist teachers' as a reason why some pupils achieved poorer results than others. This finding suggests that the young people identified themselves as Muslim rather than 'non-white' (Modood, 2010), and that they were confronted by Islamophobia rather than the 'old racism' and dualism of black and white (Hill, 2009, Gillborn, 2010). However, the young people's evidence about

teacher perceptions of their neighbourhood: 'Please, Miss, I live there, it's not that bad.'
(Adeela, 21-12-11) demonstrates that they still face negative and hurtful labelling.

The school incident, where Pakistani-heritage students were singled out and forbidden to congregate in groups of more than three, illustrates teacher perceptions of Muslim boys as potentially threatening as recorded by Crozier and Davies (2005) and Archer (2003). The need to challenge 'static' teacher stereotypes of British Muslim pupils' culture (Basit, 1997) is even more important following the London bombings of 7/7 than it was in the previous decade. Teacher ignorance can deeply frustrate the students' attempts to transform their own habitus:

'... making all these changes and trying to accommodate them in education isn't going to work if the teachers themselves don't want to know.' (Thayer, 17-9-11)

Thayer's comment indicates that habitus transformation, like 'feeling comfortable', requires a positive disposition in both pupils and teachers. Some Muslim students in Abbas' study felt that:

'My religion has meant that I am always stereotyped mainly negatively, I feel this has strongly influenced in lack of confidence in class work'(Abbas,2002a, p.302).

These findings have implications for continuing professional development for teachers, as discussed in Chapter 6.

The barriers, presented by structures rather than individuals, were recognized in Newminster by the parents rather than the young people themselves. Access to the 'better' schools was a particular concern:

'There's this resentment that we're not getting into Eastminster Academy ...

Deansgate is just off the radar, you're not going to get in there unless you've got some friends in higher places.' (Adeela, 21-12-11)

Pakistani-heritage parents recognised that ‘parental choice’ was an illusion unless they possessed the financial capital to buy a house in the narrowing catchment area of Eastminster, or, a particular form of social capital, ‘friends in higher places’, that would secure access to Deansgate. Their sense of exclusion was compounded by the fact that Deansgate is a high-achieving Church of England school where most places are awarded to parents who provide evidence of regular attendance at an Anglican church. Adeela claims to be speaking for the Beechton area as an active member of several community organizations. Her evidence was supported by other parents noted in the research diary (Safeen 20-1-11, madrassah teacher 28-11-12), indicating that the control of access by the elite and powerful in order to ensure their own social reproduction (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Apple, 2006; Gillborn, 2008a) is perceived by several parents of Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster.

Access to the curriculum is an equally contentious issue. It is illustrated by Safeen’s and Abdul’s accounts of ‘preclusion by prediction’ from their chosen subjects, and Hameeda’s observations that Pakistani-heritage pupils are over-represented in the lower sets at Eastminster Academy. Given that the data sets used to make such predictions are based on largely white norms (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000), and evidence that Pakistani-heritage pupils make *faster* progress between Key Stages 2 and 4 than their White British peers, (Strand, 2008), the data in this study suggest that the unfairness felt by Safeen and Abdul disproportionately affects pupils in the Pakistani community. Thayer observes the effects of such barriers on some of his peers:

‘... there’s this real cynicism ... among the Asians themselves, ‘Oh, we’re not going to get there anyway.’’ (Thayer (7-9-11).

Like their counterparts in Bradford, some of Thayer's peers were left with 'thwarted dreams' (Katz, 2002). Even those who achieve their coveted place at University may encounter discrimination when they enter the job market:

'... all the jobs given to white Europeans' (Survey 159).

Bhatti (2006) recorded the disillusion of some South Asian graduates in her study when their hard-won degrees failed to provide a passport to better life chances. Gillborn notes the 'forms of racism that constitutes 'business-as-usual' for the majority but which actively closes down opportunities for minoritized people' (Gillborn, 2010b, p.5). However, as the outcomes and the participants in this study testify, many of their peers pursue their aspirations in spite of such barriers, demonstrating what Yosso (2005) calls 'resistant capital'. Thus, the Pakistani-heritage pupils of Newminster discover:

'... the contradictory nature of education, wherein schools most often suppress and marginalise while they maintain the potential to emancipate and empower (Yosso, 2005, p.74) .'

Discussion of data from other sources

In this study, the emphasis is on the voices of the Pakistani-heritage young people and theirs is the primary source of data. However, as this is a case study it is particularly important to place the data in context so that practitioners may make useful comparisons with their own settings (Schofield, 2007).

In Newminster, the other, older, informants explained the attainment data by describing a range of initiatives that had been implemented by the Local Authority, the Multicultural Education Centre and community organizations to support the education and 'pluralistic integration' of Pakistani-heritage pupils when the study cohorts were at school. (See 'Data from other sources' in Chapter 4). At the time, such initiatives were considered pioneering

and a mark of the ‘most progressive’ authorities (Tomlinson, 2008, p87). To evaluate the impact of these initiatives, and of their subsequent withdrawal, would require a separate study of a different kind:

‘Multi-strand interventions in complex contexts require at the very least a corresponding increase in the complexity of evaluation designs’ (Dyson and Todd, 2010, p.120).

However, it is notable that none of these services is mentioned by the young people themselves. Perhaps this omission is because they were taken for granted and encountered as a ‘given’ in the field of the school. Certainly, the young people were vocal when the final culture-specific provision, the teaching of Urdu, was withdrawn from the curriculum at Eastminster Academy: ‘No, listen, they’re scrapping it, they’re doing a really sly one, in scrapping it without anyone noticing it...’ (Haris, 19-7-12)

Haris’s indignation was more about the lack of community consultation by the school, rather than losing the educational benefit of Urdu classes, although others argue convincingly for the advantage of studying community languages for intellectual development (Parekh, 1998; Gregory and Williams, 2000). More generally, the young participants’ accounts of the influences on their educational progress do not contradict those of the other informants. They add another perspective, an important one that is frequently overlooked. They have gained the confidence to engage in habitus transformation without abandoning their cultural and religious identities.

Summary of part one

The influences affecting the progress of Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster

The focus of the research question is upon the voices of the Pakistani-heritage pupils, so priority must be given to the influences identified by the young people when discussing the

GCSE attainment data. They emphasised the factors drawn from the 'Bull' of their tradition, culture and religion. They spoke of the intrinsic and extrinsic value placed on education by their religion and upbringing; respect for teachers as for their parents; and high expectations to achieve good qualifications and go to university, bringing honour upon the family. These aspects of their habitus embedded within them a 'set of dispositions' (Bourdieu, 1977) favouring hard work and determination to succeed at school; the same personal attributes that their peers in the survey overwhelmingly identified as the way to improve GCSE results. The same aspects of habitus prepare Pakistani-heritage pupils to survive, and often to thrive, in the contemporary field of the school with its emphasis on target-setting and 'competitive individualism' (Fielding, 2004). Being largely independent of socio-economic status, it is likely that these factors contribute to the small gap in attainment between pupils who are eligible, and those who are ineligible, for FSM. But that cannot be the whole story. As we had discussed, their parents shared the same habitus in terms of values and traditions and yet the rapid progress shown in the attainment data had been achieved within one generation.

Here is the significance of the 'Red Van'. It represents their motivation, and the means, to engage in the process of habitus transformation. For them, transformation does not mean abandoning religion and tradition. The 'Red Van' does not replace the 'Bull'. The 'Red Van' has many parts, many contributory factors that have affected the recent progress of Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster. The participants identified the transformational effects of making English friends; participating in extra-curricular and extra-mural educational activities; pursuing non-traditional subjects and encouraging girls to go to University. Other informants point to initiatives sponsored by the Local Authority, the Multicultural Education Centre and community organisations. It would be difficult, and probably fruitless, to attempt to isolate the effects of these multiple variables. Together

they present a conjunction in time and space of a Local Authority, serious about building a culturally diverse society (Parekh, 1998), and a cohort of young people whose habitus disposes them to take advantage of the opportunities open to them.

Embracing such transformation involves risk and dilemmas such as those recorded by Thayer and Hameeda. Each decision involves a choice between the potential educational benefit and the risk of dilution of culture or the sacrifice of firmly held religious tenets. Some practices are non-negotiable, as Thayer explains, but which they are is also contested. The third strand of influence affecting the progress of Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster is the range of barriers they still encounter to their own process of habitus transformation. The barriers identified in this study are, first, teachers' lack of cultural awareness, and secondly, structural barriers, built into the education system, that deny access to schools, subjects, and progression routes. The implications for practitioners, and all those with a genuine commitment to reducing '... the wide and unacceptable gaps in achievement in our school system' (DfE, 2010b, p2), are considered in the next chapter.

What cannot be concluded from the data presented above is why the attainment data in Newminster differ, in some respects, from those for Pakistani-heritage pupils elsewhere. There are very few references by the participants to other places. Thayer claims that 'the segregation [in Newminster] isn't as bad as in other cities' and two survey respondents commented that 'Everyone gets on with each other, it's not like other cities' (Survey 124, 139). It is likely that the conjunction of opportunities in the local environment, and the disposition of the Pakistani-heritage pupils to embrace them in Newminster during the period of the study, was particularly favourable to educational progress. That would require a further study with a comparative approach. This is a case study of Newminster, and it is offered for those in other places to draw their own comparisons.

Similarly, a case study focusing on the voices of the young people cannot fully explore the influences upon their progress of which they are unaware, or which they take for granted, as discussed under 'data from other sources'. Finally, the Pakistani-heritage young people in this study may encounter barriers to their progress, both those associated with their membership of a cultural minority and the structural forms of racism in the education system as identified by Gillborn (2008a), which they may not recognize. Bourdieu's concept of 'misrecognition' is applicable when members of an oppressed group take for granted a mechanism that defines worthiness, such as ranking by exam results, without recognizing its social origins (Grenfell and James, 1998). In Newminster, a potential issue of 'misrecognition' is the practice of 'preclusion by prediction', an area for further research discussed in Chapter 6.

Part two

The impact of the methodology on the research

The decision to focus the research question on ‘what Pakistani-heritage pupils say...’ and to use their discussions as the main data source, had significant methodological consequences. Troyna (1998) identifies three areas that are potentially problematic when a White researcher is studying a non-White community. First, there is the interaction between interviewer and participants during data collection. To this I would add the differences among the participants over how to speak ‘for’ their community to an outsider. Secondly, Troyna notes the impact of the researcher’s identity on the selection and interpretation of data. Thirdly, and more generally, there is the ethical problem that knowledge elicited from an oppressed community may be exploited by the dominant society to maintain its position of power.

Interactions between researcher and participants, and among participants

The first aspect relates to ‘matching’ and ‘placing’ of the researcher with, and by, the participants as discussed in Chapter 3 (Mirza, 1998; Archer, 2002). Matching has many dimensions (Merriam et al., 2001) including gender, ethnicity, and language. When embarking on the initial study, I anticipated that my ethnicity and lack of a community language would be a disadvantage (Bhatti, 1995), but that being female would be an asset. In practice, the latter proved to be true as I was welcomed into homes and given access to groups of female pupils at the Noor Academy that would have been denied to my male Muslim colleagues (R. Ali, 26-3-13). I was given babies to entertain, younger siblings to ‘mind’, and my advice was sought on a range of domestic and educational issues. I was ‘placed’, not as ‘Sister’, being a non-Muslim, but was frequently introduced as ‘Auntie’. On several occasions I was asked for help in gaining access to particular schools or college and university courses (Noor Academy teacher, 6-12-10, madrassah teacher 17-6-10).

These incidents suggest that my perceived knowledge and 'influence' in the education system positioned me as a useful source of 'linking' social capital (Putnam, 2000; Modood, 2004). My ethnicity, and the fact that I did not belong to the community being researched, proved to be both a barrier and an asset. Undoubtedly, there were occasions when I was addressed with the 'voice-for-outsiders' (Zahran, 2011) and boundaries placed around conversations to which I was *not* invited, as discussed in the section below. Archer warns that "honest, naturally occurring dialogue' with a white researcher should not be confused with 'unracialized' dialogue' (Archer, 2002, p.126). However, my peer researchers also identified an advantage in my neutral position in relation to community, and mosque politics (Zahid, 26-3-13). My Muslim colleague, who does not speak Mirpuri, had undertaken research with some of the older Pakistani-heritage residents several years previously; he had been accompanied during some interviews by a community elder acting as translator. He recalled that when the translator was present, the residents were much more hesitant in their communication than when he interviewed them alone (R. Ali, 26-3-13). His account resonated with my own experience on a number of occasions when participants shared criticisms that they would not have voiced to a Muslim 'brother': 'This won't get back to the mosque, will it?' (Thayer, 7-9-11, also madrassah teacher, 7-6-11, mosque project officer, 28-4-11). In these discussions I seemed to be placed as a 'trusted outsider'. Such trust has to be earned, and can easily be lost. Bhatti notes that when invited to children's homes she was 'tested meticulously for trustworthiness' (Bhatti, 1995, p.65). Had Thayer discovered later that I had betrayed his confidence to someone at the mosque I would have forfeited not only his trust, but that of his community.

The two dimensions of my identity which proved, unexpectedly, to have most influence on the research process were my age and faith. My age, and status as a teacher, was an asset because Muslim men were able to be seen speaking with me without loss of honour. I was

too old to provoke dishonourable thoughts (Ayesha, 20-12-11). Zahid, one of my peer researchers and himself an Imam, was happy to spend many hours in discussion in the College canteen, which would have been unthinkable were I a younger woman. However, my age was perceived as a barrier by the Noor Academy pupils, as discussed in the extract below, recorded in the presence of their co-ethnic teacher, Sofia:

AD: 'D'you think the young people who filled in the questionnaires or who took part in interviews, d'you think they would have expressed their genuine views?'

Tahira: 'What d'you mean by genuine?'

AD: 'What they really think.'

Tahira: I think most of them would, but some people might give the opposite of what they think.'

Tehmeen: 'I think that if a special person, like you for instance, comes and does questionnaires or whatever, I don't think they'd give the right answer, but if someone our age comes, or a friend comes, and then, yeah, we would, everyone would give a proper answer.'

Sofia: 'So it makes a difference to you, who asks the question, doesn't it?'

Pupils: 'Yeah, yeah.'

Tehmeen: 'Because we think what the other person's thinking about.'

Sofia: 'So if I was to ask you something, you probably wouldn't give me the answer that's as you would if another [young] person asked you something?'

Tehmeen: 'Yeah.'

Sofia: 'Oh really? – I didn't know that. (Pupils giggle) That's shocked me!'

AD: 'Anybody else got a view on that? D'you think you'd be more honest with other young people?'

Pupils: 'Yeah, yeah.'

Ruqqaya: 'People our age, yeah.'

Sofia: 'Would it matter whether they were girls or boys?'

Pupils: 'No, no.'

AD: 'Would it matter which community they were from?'

Pupils: 'No, no.'

(Noor pupils, Sofia's class, 6-12-11)

In another group, the pupils agreed that the survey was more likely to gain the 'real' views of their peers because it had been conducted by young people. Samreen explained:

'Yes, because when it's someone who's older and more experienced you think, 'Oh, it's going to be like, sort of a test, I'm going to have to be careful, like really formal writing' – but when it's for people your own age, you'll feel free and you feel a bit more comfortable to tell them your views.' (Samreen, 6-12-11)

The pupils in both groups concurred that they felt more able to express their views openly, to 'give a proper answer' in Tehmeen's words, when the questions were asked by other young people. Their co-ethnic teacher, Sofia, is shocked when they confirm that she, because of her age, would not be given the same answer as a younger person. Ethnicity and gender are unimportant, according to the pupils; it is age that matters. They explain that other young people 'would know what questions to ask' (Neelam, 6-12-11) and would understand what another young person was thinking. If the responses were written down, the presence of an older teacher-figure would make them feel that they had to write formally rather than freely. The Noor pupils' explanations that matching by age rather than ethnicity enabled them to express their views openly, is rarely discussed in the literature on researching race in education (Archer, 2002). The apparent contrast between the pupils' contemporary views and the position in earlier literature may provide further evidence of transformation of habitus, as the Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster identify

increasingly with 'youth culture'. Their discussions also offer evidence of the value of the involvement of young people as co-researchers (Kellett, 2009; Fielding, 2004; Nind, 2011).

The aspect of my identity which most unexpectedly opened doors rather than closed them was my religion. I was known to many of the participants, or their fathers and older brothers, through working on several inter-faith initiatives in the city, and my marriage to a well-known city Industrial Chaplain. Modood asserts that, for Muslims, their religious identity is more important than their ethnicity and that:

'It is better to be in the presence of religion than not and so the value of religion does not simply reside in one's own religion' (Modood, 2010, p.130).

Modood's view is, of course, controversial from a Muslim perspective but it was reiterated by several of the participants in Newminster. Those who do not share his view would probably not have spoken to me and so their voices are absent from this study. My peer researchers debated whether my Abrahamic faith made me an 'almost insider' or a 'trusted outsider' (R. Ali and Zahid, 26-3-13). Zahid and Hameeda were both at pains to explain to me aspects of the pupils' religious lives, as if to an informed outsider. At Noor Academy I was questioned, on the basis of an assumed knowledge, about the lives of prophets revered by both religions, such as Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isa (Jesus). (Noor Academy 28-11-11, 2-12-11)

Beyond such specific dimensions of 'matching' and 'placing' lie other, less tangible, aspects of the researcher's personality that help to build, or impede, research relationships. I asked Hameeda to reflect upon these aspects of my own evolving relationships within the Pakistani-heritage community in Newminster. She observed that I 'allow trustful relationships to develop', and that I hold shared values with 'people in the community',

reflecting the discussion above. She added that people sensed, from the way I spoke, that I respected their views. 'You choose your words before you say them, which people perceive as showing consideration for their perspective' (Hameeda, 13-3-14). My natural approach is to listen to others and to indicate that I am learning from them, which is particularly appropriate in an unfamiliar setting.

Merriam (2001) discusses how the identity of the researcher is re-formed by the research process. As my knowledge of Islam and Islamic education grew, through engaging in teacher training with imams and madrassah teachers and at the Noor Academy, I became better equipped to ask questions and to appreciate the answers. Similarly, my role in relation to the participants changed with different contexts and topics of conversation. At different points in the research process I have spoken *about*, *for* and *with* the young people. My aim is to achieve a balance between 'speaking for others in supportive ways' and 'engaging in dialogue' where possible (Fielding, 2004, pp.301, 305). On occasions, I have acted as their agent and advocate, for instance, in negotiating access to schools in relation to their survey. These functions can be interpreted as part of the 'linking' processes involved in building social capital (Putnam, 2000; Modood, 2004). Ultimately, the young people spoke *for* me, under hostile questioning from Councillors about the survey findings, as recorded in my research diary (REC conference, 4-12-12). That exchange offers evidence of reciprocity in the research process (Mirza, 1998).

At many points in the discussions the young people seem to be speaking *for* their Pakistani-heritage peers, prompting the question: 'Is there a 'We' in the community being represented?' (Cahill and Torre, 2007, p.196). When discussing experiences of school, the young people's voices were 'partial, multiple and contradictory' (Humphries and Martin, 2000, p.286). 'I think that's bullshit ...' (Isa, 5-1-11) was an interjection that illustrates the

tone of several of the discussions. In contrast, when explaining matters of ‘tradition’, ‘upbringing’, and ‘values’, it is notable from the transcripts that the young people speak with a far more united voice. They seem to be presenting to me, as an invited outsider, what they want me to hear and disseminate about their culture. They are speaking *for* their community in a way that will be approved *by* the community. Bhatti provides a likely explanation for the participants’ collective voice in this context:

‘When there are institutional moves to absorb and ‘silence’ community, or if the community feels that an oppressive move is afoot, there is a reflex action, a collective move to retain cultural capital through whatever means possible, including the maintenance of identity through religion’ (Bhatti, 2006, p.140).

The young people’s unity in promoting the positive influence of their shared cultural values can be seen, in part, as a constructed response to the generally negative portrayal of the Pakistani community in local media and the very recent visit (at the time of the recordings) of the English Defence League to Newminster. They may also feel under pressure from *within* the community to present an ‘authorised version’ of their account to an outsider. Masood’s message to the British-Pakistani community in Newminster is to be ‘united by ideas not divided by differences’ (R.Masood, book launch 26-10-11). The young people may be critical in private, and occasionally they exchange private jokes while I am present, (notes on discussions 19-7-12) but are hesitant about making negative comments about the community on the recording:

Haniya: ‘I think especially in our community, it’s really hard because you’ve got to bear in mind, culture and that.’

Haris: ‘mmm’

Haniya: (to AD) ‘D’you understand?’

AD: (uncertainly) ‘Yes.’

Haniya: 'So it's more difficult for us, especially as girls, come on (pause) – you all know that.'

Haris: (laughs) (indistinct) 'Come on, why should they all [do better]?'

Faiza: (laughs)

Haniya: 'You just killed it there, just killed it.'

(Faiza and Haniya both laugh nervously)

Faiza: (indistinct) ... 'Come on, let's not start on that.'

(Young people 19-7-12)

Haniya hopes that I, as an invited outsider, might understand that there are still areas of her life where 'it's really hard' for girls in the Pakistani-heritage community, in spite of our previous discussions about habitus transformation. Haris and Faiza are nervous that she may be leading me into areas where I am *not* invited, and close the conversation down.

In contrast, Thayer shares with me aspects of his story of which his community would *not* approve.

'We [Muslims] know when we're being walked all over apart from, unfortunately, the Pakistanis – not being funny but, as soon as I started learning that all of these things I'm doing have nothing to do with my religion, I abandoned them in secret.' (Thayer 7-9-11)

As noted above, Thayer seems to have placed me as a 'trusted outsider', who may be safely invited into areas where the community is under criticism. Zahid, one of my peer researchers, has written critically, and controversially, about a range of 'cultural' practices within the community. He has warned me about the 'the voice-for-outsiders':

'A number of Muslims living in Britain appear to have two personalities – one outside their front door to deal with the society at large, the other inside their homes' (Zahid, 2011, p.6).

Both Thayer and Zahid have ‘placed’ me as a researcher, an academic with whom they have some affinity because of their own aspirations:

‘These are the facts, I would love to study it one day after I finish [his degree] ...

y’know, sifting through whether the text is actually authentic.’ (Thayer 7-9-11)

Both seem to be speaking *about* the Pakistani-heritage community in a way that they want me to transcribe, and perhaps disseminate, because for them to do so would be too costly.

Thayer urges me to join the campaign he has organised to support a female political prisoner in Karachi because ‘people in Newminster, the Pakistanis, have forgotten about this woman ... very defeatist mentality that, ‘Oh, they’ll come after us if we do something.’’ (Thayer 7-9-11) Zahid specifically appeals to me to use my influence with the Local Authority, an influence which he erroneously presumes I have, to prevent certain forms of teaching ‘that cause harm and promulgate ignorance’ at the madrassahs.’ (Zahid 17-1-13)

The accounts above indicate how the participants’ voices are coloured by their ‘sedimented histories and ideological constructs’ (Cruddas, 2007, p.484) – in other words, by their *habitus*. Their voices are also modulated by their relationship with the researcher and their expectations of a wider audience to whom I might have access. The young people are not so concerned to tell me what they think *I* want to hear, but what *they* want me to hear. Their voices have an ‘interior authority’ (Hadfield and Haw, 2001). My task is twofold; to represent what they tell me, as faithfully and respectfully as I can, whilst acknowledging my own role in selection and analysis of their narratives:

‘... treating people’s voices with respect, representing what they would want to be presented’ (Walmsley, 2013).

Impact of the researcher on selection and interpretation of data

When considering how to represent what the participants would want to be presented, it is important to note that I had already introduced a significant source of bias within the data by adopting the role of 'invited outsider'. The involvement of participants was opportunistic, voluntary and subject to their initiative in issuing an invitation. Some may have invited me because they wanted to help me and may have been helpfully telling me what they thought I wanted to hear. Others may have become involved because they had their own agenda and message that they wanted to promote. Working within a broadly critical framework requires a particularly difficult balance to be achieved between 'giving voice' to the community, encouraging them to steer the agenda, and allowing the study to be manipulated to the point where it becomes simply a political vehicle.

Allowing the direction of the study to be steered by the themes emerging from the young people's discussions led to a sense of 'losing control over the data' (Bhatti, 1995, p.64). I had to abandon the pursuit of a neat Ofsted-style list of factors that help Pakistani-heritage pupils to achieve good results, as I had hoped at the start of the study. Despite the divergences from my original aim, my voice as researcher, is inevitably present throughout the study (Chase, 2005). This factor is partly counterbalanced by the extended use of extracts from the participants' discussions, allowing both my peer-researchers and subsequent readers to challenge my interpretations. However, the selection of data remained unavoidably in my control, introducing further researcher bias. Hameeda argued that I had chosen passages that 'fitted Bourdieu's theories' (Hameeda, 15-2-13), causing me to review my process of selection and analysis. Having reconsidered, I was not deflected in this instance because I was using Bourdieu to provide an analytical framework, not a 'theory'. His framework was sufficiently versatile to accommodate the

majority of the recorded data and most of the comments of the survey on topics related to the research question.

The explanations offered by the young people could be framed in terms of the possession of 'capitals' rather than habitus:

'The family for Bourdieu is both a habitus-generating institution and a key site for the accumulation of cultural capital' (Reay, 1998, p.56).

However, Bourdieu's description of 'cultural capital' is inappropriate in this context. For Bourdieu, cultural capital is related to aspects of 'high' culture and the possession of artistic artefacts that are the prerogative of the middle and upper classes (Bourdieu, 1983). More appropriate concepts of 'cultural-social capital', 'ethnic capital' (Modood, 2004) and 'community cultural wealth' have been propounded to describe the 'array of cultural knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed by socially marginalized groups that often go unrecognized and acknowledged' (Yosso 2005, p.69). The forms of capital offered by Modood and Yosso (aspirational, familial, social, navigational, resistant, and linguistic) could all be identified at points in the participants' accounts. However, as an analytical tool, these concepts suggest questions of 'how much?' and of correlations with attainment such as those presented by Putnam (2000). The 'messiness' of the concept of habitus, and its emphasis on 'embodiment, the complex interplay between past and present, [and] the tension between collective and individual trajectories' (Reay, 1995, p116), has much resonance with the young people's narratives. 'It's *embedded* within us,' Haris explains (19-7-12).

In terms of Troyna's (1998) cautions to the white researcher, my greater vulnerability was in the allocation within, and selection and interpretation of data from, the analytical framework. My attempts to involve the young people in the process of coding and analysis

produced chaotic results. Their selected codings of sample passages (illustrated in Appendix (x)) were completely different from mine but also entirely inconsistent amongst themselves, reinforcing the conclusion that this process inevitably bears the stamp of the researcher. They did not have the time, or the incentive, to engage in lengthy negotiations about codings and I did not have the resources to make it worth their while. However, they and the Noor pupils engaged enthusiastically in explaining and interpreting comments and responses where I had identified my own incomprehension. Questions such as: ‘What do the pupils mean by ‘events’?’ and ‘How would such ‘events’ promote inter-community relations for young people in Newminster?’ re-engaged their interest. Notably, most of the questions I raised proved to be due to my lack of understanding of youth culture, reinforcing the Noor pupils’ diagnosis of age as the most significant difference between us. The pupils at the Noor Academy, some of whom were studying GCSE Psychology, were keen to interpret their peers’ comments and to advise and challenge the researcher. Their perceptive contributions are constrained by the school environment, where they may have been making comments of which their Psychology teacher, who was present for one of the three discussion sessions, would approve (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008). Ethical issues like whether, and how, to report on responses involving expletives and offensive remarks were avidly debated:

‘I think the second option [to include expletives because they show the respondent’s strength of feeling] because everything can, like, lead to the background...and you’d need to know more better, like why they used those words.’ (Nazreen, Noor Academy, 6-12-11)

Nazreen and her group thought that the responses could not be understood without knowing more about the context in which the individual had given them, and so the inclusion of expletives provided additional information about that context.

The discussion above illustrates some of the advantages, and complications, of using a variety of data sources when seeking to understand a complex set of influences (Dyson and Todd, 2010). The statistical findings were useful in providing a focus for my initial discussions with the young people and in generating the interest of other groups, such as the MCRG, leading to further invitations. The survey proved valuable in eliciting data that might not have been shared with me directly because of my age, ethnicity or teacher status. During the analysis, the survey proved helpful in gauging the extent to which a particular viewpoint expressed by the young people was more widely held among their peers. In turn, the discussions with the Noor pupils about the survey results contributed much to my understanding of their peers' responses.

Finally, in the task of analysis, I was heavily reliant upon the patient reading and constructive criticism of my peer researchers. Hameeda was a patient critic of my interpretations and corrected my excursions into 'cultural pathology' (Shain, 2003): 'This is about personality types, not stereotypes' (Hameeda, 13-4-12). Zahid carefully explained nuances of culture and religion of which I was unaware.

The third danger articulated by Troyna, of well-intentioned research being used to perpetuate inequalities, I found the hardest to defend against during the research process. It has already happened with some of the statistical results. My research diary records that I was told in a Council sub-committee: 'Don't come asking for funding for English classes for Asian women, your own results prove it's not needed any more.' (Cabinet member for Education, ESOL Delivery Board, 30-9-11). There is a further unintended consequence, that the young people's participation in the research project may have raised unrealistic expectations of the outcomes for local policy-making. The possible implications of the research for policy and practice are explored in the following chapter.

Chapter 6

Discussion of the implications of the study for practice, policy and future research

Introduction

‘I want to ask Alison what she is going to do about these results.’

(Nazreen, REC conference, 3-12-12)

Nazreen posed her question from the audience at a public conference in Newminster Council Chambers where I had just presented the results of the young people’s survey (See ‘Data from other sources’ Chapter 4). She and her classmates from the Noor Academy had been both respondents in the survey and participants in the analysis. Although I was ‘rescued’, for the second time that evening, by one of the older participants who explained that they wanted to know what the *Council* would do about the results, Nazreen’s question stands. The young people were equally demanding:

Faiza: ‘I think it’s like this... they bring a project in, they, y’know, do it for a few months, then that’s it, they’ll go away, once they’ve got their results, then that’s it, they won’t wanna work with the people again!’
(Said with vehemence, with greater strength of feeling than Faiza has used in the whole discussion.)

Haniya: ‘They don’t carry on, y’know, each year.’

Faiza: ‘They just stop there, once they’ve got their results then that’s it, Bye- bye, Ta-Ta’ (young people 19-7-12)

As this study prioritizes the voices of the young people, then Faiza’s and Nazreen’s challenges must be addressed. In this chapter I discuss first, the outcomes desired by the young people themselves; second, other implications for policy and practice arising from the data; and finally, the implications for further research, including what I would do differently if approaching this project afresh.

Issues raised by the young people

The first outcome resulting from the exploration of influences underpinning their educational progress, raised in some form by all groups of participants, was the need to feel 'comfortable' in lessons. This requirement was the subject of extended discussion by the Noor pupils, the madrassah pupils, and Thayer. They make the logical connection that if you do not feel comfortable in class you cannot ask questions when you get stuck, so you cannot make progress. The importance of a 'comfortable' learning environment is well documented in the context of inclusive education (for example, Kenny et al., 2005) but rarely translated into observation schedules for mainstream secondary classrooms (Ofsted, 2013b). For the Pakistani-heritage pupils in this study, their teachers may well 'listen to, carefully observe and skilfully question pupils' (Ofsted, 2013b, p.39) but the pupils may still feel inhibited about actively asking for help. For teacher training and internal observations the participants would recommend the inclusion of a question such as: 'How do teachers ensure that individual students feel sufficiently comfortable to ask for help when they do not understand?'

The second outcome emphasised by the participants, is for teachers to have more 'cultural understanding' (Adeela, 21-12-11). The young people are aware that some of their teachers hold racial stereotypes of them, and they want to challenge these without repercussions that they fear would harm their educational progress. This is not a new finding; the pupils in Bhatti's study two decades ago designated teachers who 'stereotyped Asian children' as 'bad' teachers (Bhatti, 1995, p.184). However, since the events of 9/11 (2001) and the London bombings of 7/7 (2005), there is a new, hostile, fearful dimension to the stereotypes of Muslim young people (Archer, 2003; Bhatti, 2011; REC Islamophobia conference 2-11-11), presenting them with a further barrier before they can negotiate their needs for a conducive learning environment (Gillborn, 2008a). The implication is a need

for teacher training and staff development in cultural awareness, also identified in discussion at the MCRG parenting conference (Action points from conference, 18-4-10). The young people themselves want a space for ‘dialogic interaction’ with teachers (Cruddas, 2007), where they can safely challenge stereotypes and share significant aspects of their current identities as learners. Thayer, who did discover that place of dialogue with certain teachers, extends the principle to others in authority:

‘The main point that I say from this meeting ... is that there needs to be engagement, the council needs to start just showing that they care, and it means having to sit down with people that *they* feel uncomfortable with, because that’s what it’s about in the end, it’s about being uncomfortable.’ (Thayer, 17-9-11)

Thayer’s call to councillors underlines the importance for policy makers and practitioners of engaging in dialogue with those with whom they feel *uncomfortable*.

The third appeal from the young people is for ‘events’. It came from the survey respondents and it was echoed by the Noor Academy pupils and interpreted by the young co-researchers. ‘Events’ are occasions that bring young people from different communities together to engage in a common activity. The theme of the event is less important, although sport and inter-faith activities were commonly suggested (Noor pupils, 6-12-11; Surveys 13,18,33,75,84,125,127,139,147). An ‘event’ requires organisation by adults or youth workers in consultation with the young people; it requires a ‘venue’ and a modest budget. The participants look to the local council, or the police, for such provision, but in the current financial climate their calls fall on deaf ears (Abid, REC conference, 3-12-12). They see the principal benefit in terms of improving community relations and reducing tension between groups of different ethnicities. They echo Modood’s description of citizenship as a ‘continuous dialogue’, or a ‘multilogue’ (Modood, 2010, p.63). However there is also a significant educational benefit for pupils from the Pakistani-heritage

community (and, no doubt, others) as the parent/teachers explain (Sofia, 15-11-10; Hameeda, 9-12-10). The educational advantage of making cross-cultural friendships and learning ‘different ways of thinking’ is attested by Thayer and Hameeda from their own experience. Bourdieu (1983) and Putnam (2000) explain their success in terms of building social capital, by ‘bridging’ and ‘linking’.

Wider implications for policy and practice

When discussing the ‘call to action’ (Guba and Lincoln, 2005) of this study, the participants focus on the local, immediate and, in their view, practicable outcomes for teachers and the local council. In addition, the researcher may have knowledge and experience of ‘the system’ that the young participants have not yet acquired, so it is part of her role (Walmsley, 2004) to identify and share possible implications from her own understanding. The first implication, above, is for in-service teacher education and curriculum development – my main field of work over the last 15 years. For teachers in mainstream secondary schools and colleges, there is often little opportunity for training in cultural awareness beyond generic ‘equality and diversity’ sessions. Strategies for differentiation and inclusion of pupils from specific minority-ethnic groups are rare. The DfE website currently offers only one document on ‘Raising the Achievement of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali and Turkish heritage pupils’, archived from 2007 (DfE, 2012), and it is based on a deficit model of these pupils’ needs. On the basis of the Newminster case study, I would argue for inclusion of four aspects of ‘equality and diversity’ in education modules and materials designed for practising teachers, or locally based teacher development programmes. First, for reflexive inquiry into the stereotypes we hold about pupils of different backgrounds, and particularly to challenge the media portrayal of young British Muslims, as called for by the young people in the study. Secondly, it is important to build on the insights gained from this study about the value that Pakistani-heritage pupils

bring to their schooling, drawn from their religious and cultural traditions. This understanding is particularly important at a time when the UK government's new national curriculum (DfE, 2013b) seems focused on 'forms of cultural knowledge deemed valuable by dominant society' (Yosso, 2005, p.75):

'[The] recognition of social and ethnic diversity in the history curriculum would be extremely valuable in building self belief within Muslim children; it would also help bust a myth among others that Muslim youth are a 'problem'' (Bari, 2012).

In Newminster and the wider Muslim community (Modood, 2004; Shah et al., 2010), Pakistani-heritage pupils come to education with high aspirations. Moreover, their eligibility for FSM, now used as the government's proxy for 'disadvantage' (DfE, 2010c), has very little effect on their valuing of education, or on their rate of progress in school. They do not need teachers to raise their expectations; they need their support in negotiating structural barriers to attainment.

A third, related aspect of teacher-awareness is for teachers to understand and respect the importance of religion to their Pakistani-heritage and British Muslim pupils. In local schools and colleges with a high proportion of Pakistani-heritage pupils, religious observances such as the Eid holiday, and attendance at after-school madrassah classes, are often seen as an interruption and a hindrance to the students' educational progress (Strand, 2008; Abbas, 2002a). Further research is needed to assess and recognise the educational benefits of the attitudes and practices drawn from these classes, as reported by the Newminster participants. Gregory and Williams' (2000) study is rare in recording the syncretism between children's literacy development in Arabic and community languages at mosque and English at school. With the emphasis in the new national curriculum (DfE,

2013b) on learning poetry and multiplication tables by heart, teachers may have much to learn from the techniques used by our colleagues in the madrassahs.

Fourthly, the evidence from this study supports the wider consideration of the process of 'habitus transformation', and its importance as a mechanism in the educational progress of Pakistani-heritage pupils. These pupils are engaged in the difficult and demanding task of transforming their habitus, and are frustrated that the attitudes of some teachers trap them in a perception that is out of date, if it were ever true. As Thayer points out:

'Making all these changes...isn't going to work if the teachers themselves don't want to know' (Thayer, 7-9-11).

'Making all these changes' involves costs and dilemmas that may be strange to teachers who have been educated in a secularized Western society. However, 'it is within the domain of education that new futures are formed' (Bhatti, 2006, p.134) and teachers can play a key role by 'wanting to know', in Thayer's words, and by facilitating the 'events' that the young people call for to support the process.

A specific policy concern raised by this study is in relation to support for pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) needs. As has been noted above, over 85% of the Pakistani-heritage respondents in the survey gave English as their first or equal first language. However, many of their parents' generation started school with much less proficiency in English (Shilela, 2013). It is reasonable to claim that one factor affecting the significant improvement in GCSE attainment between the two generations was the provision, by an enlightened Local Education Authority, of multi-cultural advisers and bilingual support assistants in the primary schools in the Beechton neighbourhood. Several of the primary schools in Newminster now have over 50% of their pupils with significant EAL needs (Local Authority PLASC data). These children are not from Pakistani-heritage

families, but speak over 100 different languages of Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. As discussed in Chapter 4, there is now no dedicated government funding to address their language needs like the 'Section 11' and EMAG funding that supported the Pakistani-heritage pupils of the previous generation. Whether they can make similar progress without it requires further monitoring and research.

A significant structural barrier to progress for the Pakistani-heritage pupils in this study is the practice I have identified as 'preclusion by prediction' (see 'Barriers to transformation' Chapter 5). Both parents and pupils highlighted the perceived unfairness of being denied access to particular subjects, or tiers of entry, for GCSE because of predicted grades based on their scores at KS3 and other factors such as teacher recommendation and postcode. Whilst pupils of many backgrounds are disappointed when they are unable to pursue their chosen options for GCSE, the evidence from this study supports the interpretation that for Pakistani-heritage pupils this practice amounts to institutional racism, an interpretation not recognized by the young people. One particular minority ethnic group, Pakistani-heritage pupils, is particularly disadvantaged because national and local data (Strand 2007, 2008; Newminster data analysed for the REC) show that these pupils make faster progress between KS3 and KS4 than their White British peers, and yet the prediction mechanisms are standardized against White British norms. Clearly, such a claim requires further testing, research and review but it is important to the participants that it be pursued.

Further Research and methodological outcomes

As this is a case study, any more general recommendations require further research, including those above. It is plausible that, for findings related to the 'Bull' of tradition, culture and religion for Mirpuri Pakistani-heritage pupils, Newminster may represent a 'typical' site in Schofield's (1990) terms (See 'Generalizability' Chapter 3). In relation to

the 'Red Van', the complex mechanisms of habitus transformation and the conditions in the local environment which make such transformation possible, could exemplify Newminster as a 'site of good practice'. Such speculations call for comparative studies involving Pakistani-heritage pupils in other locations. Further investigation is needed to evaluate the contribution of changing expectations of girls to the overall progress of Pakistani-heritage pupils in Newminster, as suggested by Shahzad, and the impact of mosque-based support classes for English and Maths for pupils currently in KS2 and 3.

The Newminster study raises two areas of further research related to methodology rather than to specific findings. First, there is the role of peer-researchers. For a cross-cultural study such as this, with the explicit aim of developing shared understanding, their involvement was vital and has perhaps been understated in the account. Their knowledge, advice and constructive criticism, on a wide range of cultural and religious factors raised by the participants, has been invaluable. My aim is to make some reciprocal contribution as their own cross-cultural studies develop, and that we may share our collective reflections on the process with others undertaking research in similar settings. Second, is the role of the young participants. Learning that young respondents felt more able to speak openly to other young people is a strong endorsement of the model of 'young people as co-researchers' (Fielding, 2004) in research of this nature. Were I approaching this study with the benefit of hindsight, I would have given them a clear voice from the outset and involved them in establishing the focus and development of the study.

Conclusion

This study opened with some good news for, and about, the Pakistani heritage pupils of Newminster. They had made rapid progress in GCSE attainment over the previous decade, and their results showed relatively little detriment as a consequence of deprivation, which

blighted the prospects for so many of their peers. The research question asked why this was so, and the study has focused specifically on the influences underpinning their educational progress, as identified by the young people themselves (summarized in Chapter 5). As the study concludes, their younger siblings and recent migrants face new challenges to their educational advancement. In popular discourse, the fear of Islam as a generator of young terrorists is growing, and immigration is blamed for a range of social ills. In the corridors of power and policy, multiculturalism has been declared dead, and with it the requirement to consider the particular needs and contributions of different minority ethnic groups. Against this background, Newminster provides evidence of the valuable insight brought by minoritized young people to the discussion of their progress through the field of education. Not to the token consultation about the design of a new school uniform, but consultation about the analysis of results normally reserved for discussion in Senior Management Teams. Their insights must be directly drawn into the conduct of research and into the hierarchy of decision-making, not only as a matter of social justice, but because of the unique contribution they will make. The cost of such a contribution is that those in power may have ‘to sit down with people that they feel uncomfortable with, because that’s what it’s about in the end’ (Thayer, 17-9-11). What it’s about, for Thayer and for this study, is to create a space for dialogue where policy-makers and researchers can hear the unheard voices and so to build a shared understanding of the complexities of educational progress.

‘There is no greater wealth than wisdom, no greater poverty than ignorance, no greater heritage than culture, and no greater support than consultation.’

(Imam Ali Ibn Abu Talib, 7th Century CE.)

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Appendix (i)

Cohort data for Newminster Local Authority 2010 (Charts 1, 2, 5 – 9)

(Source: Local Authority data and DfE 2010)

Note: Cohort sizes for all pupils in Year 11 in the Local Authority with the exception of one small (all female) independent school.

	Cohort size	Eligible for FSM	Not eligible for FSM
All pupils	2314	343	1971
White British	1542	199	1343
Pakistani	254	70	184
White European	89		
Indian	44		

Appendix (ii)

Attainment data updated for 2011 and 2012: Compare Charts 5 and 7 Chapter 4

Chart 5A (Chart 5 updated) Percentage of pupils achieving 5A*-C 2005 -2012

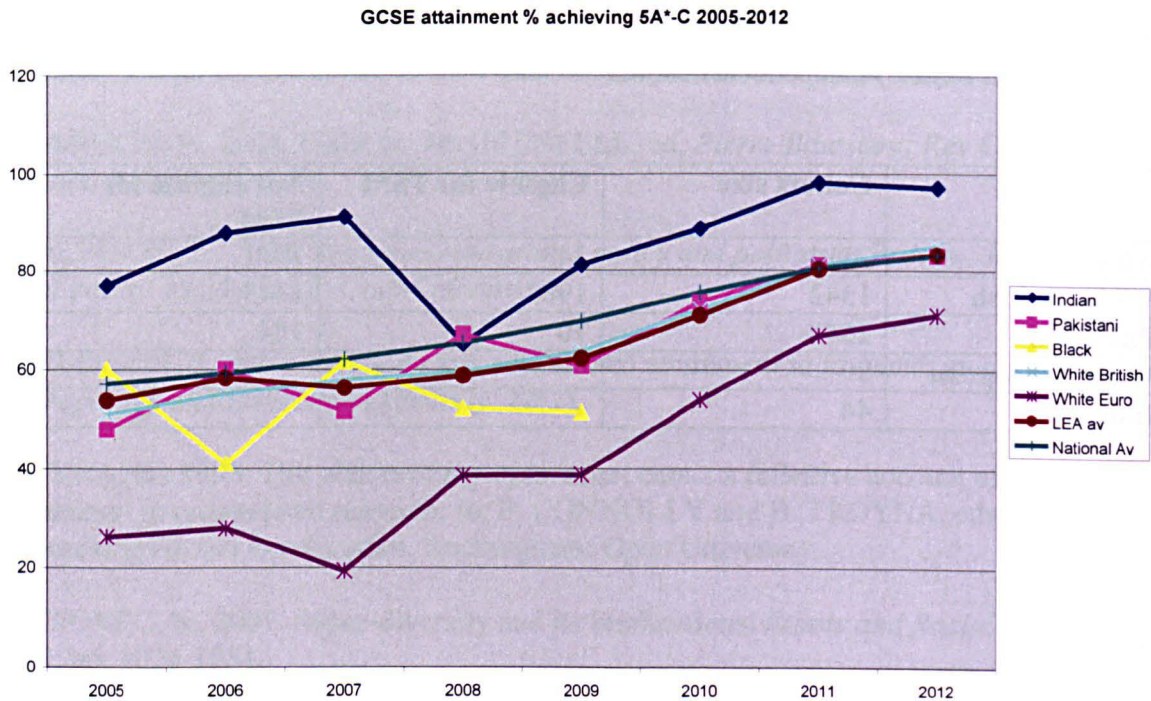
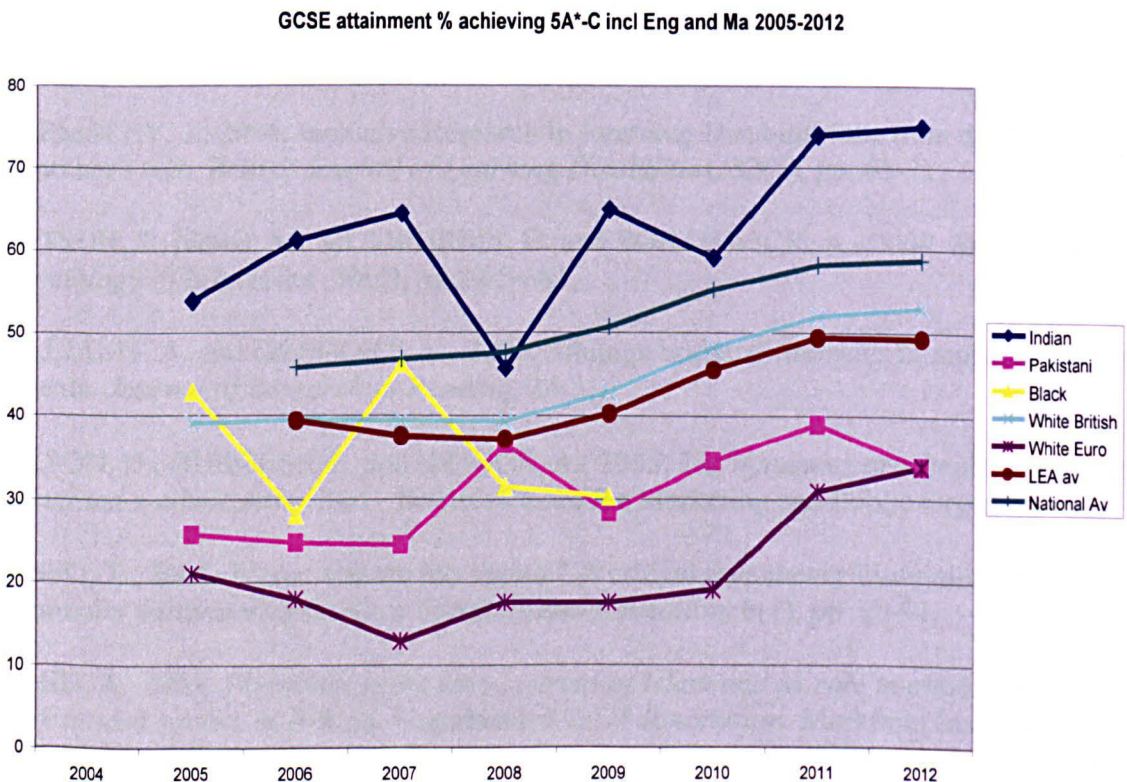


Chart 7A (Chart 7 updated) Percentage of pupils achieving 5A*-C including English and Maths by ethnicity 2005 -2012



Appendix (iii)

Letter to potential participants requesting consent

March 2012

Dear

Thank you for your interest in participation in a research project investigating the factors that have affected the achievement of pupils of Pakistani heritage in the Local Authority. I am writing to explain in more detail about the project and what would be involved if you confirm that you wish to participate.

The research project

The study is part of a doctoral research project for [Newminster] Racial Equality Council and the Open University entitled 'An investigation of factors affecting the progress of Pakistani heritage pupils in one Local Authority'. The aim is to gain understanding of strategies both in schools and the community that have supported the significant progress made by pupils of Pakistani heritage locally in recent years, so that this knowledge may be used to help groups that are currently underachieving.

Your part in the research

A very important part of the research is to gain the views of students themselves, and members of the community, as this is missing from much of the related research available. If you agree, I would like to interview you about your own views and experiences in relation to the research topic. The interview would be audio-recorded if you permit, so that I can get an exact record of what you said.

Confidentiality

Anything you say in the interview will be confidential between us. In anything I write about our discussion all the data will be anonymous, and even the name of the schools and the Local Authority will be changed. You will have the opportunity to check any extracts from your interview that I write up, and they will only be included with your permission. The recording of the interview (and any notes I take) will be stored digitally on a private machine and destroyed once the project has finished.

Your right to withdraw

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary, with the aim of benefiting future students and teachers. You may withdraw from the project at any point and request the destruction of any data you have provided up to that point.

Of course, I do hope that you will find the project interesting and will agree to participate.

Thank you
Alison Davies

Contact:

E alison@mostyn.myzen.co.uk

T 01778 342838

Consent Information

I understand that:

- My participation in this project is entirely voluntary
- I may withdraw from the project at any time
- Interviews may be recorded but the data will be stored on a private PC and deleted at the end of the project
- Any information I provide will be treated confidentially and used anonymously if it is reported orally or in writing
- I will be offered the opportunity to review the information that is to be used, and to discuss the findings of the project as it progresses

Signed

Appendix (iv)

Extract from interview transcript with initial coding

Each page of the actual transcript has the codes from that page repeated at the top of the page and colour-coded for easy reference

Participants : 6 young people, 2 females (F1, F2) and 4 males, the youth leader (Ad) and the researcher (Al)

M2 When I was in year 2 I went to Pakistan for 8 months and [when] I come back they put me back a year for 1 day, and then they said no you're too clever, go back (laughter) but with normal students they would have stayed back a year (others yeah, yeah) we don't no longer take them long holidays

M3 That's helped a lot as well [7d]

M1 Parents understand as well now [7g]

F2 (indistinct) they understand now because if you do go you get imprisoned

F1 That's why, yeah

Ad But some parents are willing to pay the fine [7d 7g]

Al What about homework clubs – did any of you...

(Several simultaneous) Yeah

M1 I never went to homework club

M3 I used to go to homework club [5j]

Ad That's one of the issues, community ... [4b]

Al and was that helpful – I mean, you've talked a lot about teachers, but...

M1 I think that links into the tuition and stuff, extra help, they would be, I think [7k]

Al (to F2 and M2) Did you two? [go to Homework club]

F2 I used to, yeah

M2 DT, yes, I stayed till 9

Al And did it help?

M2 Yeah – of course it helped [5j]

Al Well that could be a difference?...

M2 No, they were usually mixed [the classes] [5j]

M3 I think that's bullshit, I used to go to the IT room, it was just full of Pakistanis [5j]

M4 They interrupt more with the Pakistani youth workers - that's significantly increased over the years, seeing more youth workers there helping out, kids like that..

Ad Youth *intervention* programmes

M4 ..and community representatives there as well

A1 Which school are you talking about?

M4 'Eastminster' – Westminster High as well, they go and work with them [5k]

M1 They do peer mentoring as well, don't they?

M2 They didn't peer mentor me, but...

F2 You wasn't one of the top 50, then?

M2 (agreeing) Not one of the top 50, no, not an achiever (indistinct) [5a]

A1 So I'm here, working for the REC, have you got any advice, from your own experience that could be used to help other communities that are not achieving as well

M4 To be honest with you, I'd love to share the secret but you can't, it's upbringing, it's culture, it's values (others agree) – which a lot of my white friends, even my Indian friends at school don't have as much as we would

M1 We still fear out parents (others, yeah)

M4 We still fear our parents – you could be as (indistinct) as you want, but you'd still get..... [7h]

M1 Two generations time, when we don't fear out parents, then....

M4 Then it would be different, because that's what's gonna happen [7l]

Ad I'd love to see the figures, after 2008, for 2009 and 10

A1 I can give you those

Ad 'cos I think it's changed [7i]

M1 D'you know what, I think we should do this in 10 years time when the conservatives have gone out, to see what the statistics are like then [7i]

M3 Cos then you'd be dead (laughter)

Appendix (v)

Example Index Sheet for initial coding

Letters in the last column indicate the particular transcript(s) or research diary entries where that coding is used.

7) Religious, social and cultural factors

7a) Community 'doing things for themselves'	PB
7b) Aspiration / motivation of P-h pupils (cross ref 4e)	PB / ABC / RD18/4 / RD 9/5
7c) Increasing expectation of girls	Ha /PB / ABC / AR / Rh / RD 19/1
7d) Visits to Pakistan	ABC
7e) 2 nd / 3 rd generation educated here	PB / ABC / Ha
7f) Arranged marriages, one parent from Pakistan	PB / ABC / Ha
7g) Improved understanding of school 'system' (cross ref 7e)	PB / ABC / Ha / RD 18/4
7h) Tradition / upbringing (cross ref 7l) 7m)	ABC / Ha / RD 9/12
7i) Political views of P-h parents (cross ref 1d)	ABC
7j) Reaction to negative image (cross ref 2f)	ABC
7k) Use of extra tuition (cross ref 5j) 4b)	ABC / Ha
7l) Dilution of culture (cross ref 7h)	ABC/ RD 18/4
7m) Religion	ABC / Rh / RD9/5
7n) Protection of girls	Ha

Appendix (vi)

Extract from interview transcript with coding using framework based on concepts from Bourdieu

(Note: Each code is embedded at the end of its bold bracket type section. E.g. [because they ... stick together' , BC Neg] or { I'm not going to say the system ... bullying , HC Neg} some differently bracketed sections overlap.)

Codes: Sch : Field of School; HC: Habitus of home and community; R: Religion; HFC: Habitus / field clash; HT: Habitus Transformation; BC: Bonding Capital; BrC: Bridging Capital; Sub Codes: Neg: Negative experience; Ed: Positive influence for education

Thayer: [{ I'm not going to say the system broke him [his father] down but it was the other way round , **Sch Neg**] he did say that there was a lot of racism at the time – but I do think at the same time, [because they told their kids 'don't hang around with people who aren't the same race as you, stick together' , **BC Neg**] because they still had this, er, I think, idea that people of different races are just out there to get each other. That's what happened in [school name], by the time I was in year 9, I used to feel, I said to myself I'm not going to fool myself and think that my own kind are – [[because a lot of the stress that I went through, the [bullying , **HC Neg**] part of which was actually instigated by the teachers themselves, because they used to have it in for me, for instance, yeah ... **Sch Neg** **HFC.**]

AD: What, you personally or people who looked as if they were Pakistani?

Thayer: [No, oh no I don't think it was a race thing, I mean I've done a lot of studies on racism myself, you know, old racism, new racism, aggressive racism etc **HT**] [– I think in schools, amongst teachers, {I think that they were frightened of the Pakistanis **Sch Neg**], [and I don't blame them 'cos you know it's the first time they've [the Pakistani- heritage pupils] met English people and I'm sorry to say it, but by the time I was in year 7, a lot of these people [Pakistanis] this was the first time they've ever met someone who was English – because none of them ever used to travel out of [Beechton], **BC Neg** **HC Neg**] and, em, [parents would tell them, y'know, be good mannered etc, my parents would tell me the same thing, y'know, if you misbehave then (laughs) see what happens to you etc. **HC Ed**] Um, [I think that racism amongst teachers was gone, by then from what I see **Sch Ed HT**] , because, all right, [there were one or two cases but I don't think they were as bad as it was exaggerated, whereas a lot of the time, a lot of the teachers I think they was just incompetent. There was one teacher, there was one Asian teacher who was Indian I think, science teacher, used to walk around with a ruler, smacking at people's tables (laughs), getting really angry, and at one time he was actually convinced that I was dealing drugs, in year 7, {but admittedly someone had put some powder in my Robot Wars pencil case, and, um, yeah, then he started, y'know, he started going off on one because some kid, the same kid that put it in, told the teacher, 'oh, he's got drugs in his pencil case' and I started crying, I started going crazy etc and, um, yeah it was the talk of the year **Sch Neg**]– same talk of the year in year 8 or 9 when my Mum's gold jewellery was stolen and my Dad did the ridiculous thing of grabbing the person he thought had stolen it in the back of the car, and shouting at him and then letting him go **HC Neg**}. [{Um, by the time I was in year 9 I started hanging around with all the English, y'know the English students, because I slowly started getting more interested in English language, in Humanities, and stuff like that, because it was interesting **BrC Ed**]– I didn't, I don't think my brain functioned in a way that was – I don't think I'm a logical learner, so like Maths, and Physics and Sciences were **HT Ed**] [– in fact Science was one of the most hated subjects amongst everyone, because it was so badly taught **Sch Neg**]– um, I'm not sure if you remember [this one teacher that

was in a controversy because she supposedly ripped a scarf off this woman, off this girl, off this student – **Sch Neg HFC]**

AD: In Newminster?

Thayer: Yeah, [in [school name] and it came up in the papers, she got disciplined for it and, um, she got sued for it, she got disciplined, and she's now at Northminster **Sch]**, I'm not going to mention her name, [but I thought personally that the girl who raised it, the girl who was supposedly the victim, was a bit of a hell raiser herself, so, y'know, playing the race card is a bit petty, but **HT]** {what I have found with Pakistanis personally, is (that they still have this, unfortunately it's [within other Muslim community as well, this tribalistic mentality, y'know we only look after our own **R]**, they'll say things like, 'we are all one Ummah' – that is we are all one community, until they start saying, y'know, 'we want to marry your daughters' (laughs). **HC Neg} BC)**

Appendix (vii)

Example index sheet for coding relating to concepts from Bourdieu

Letters in the last column indicate the particular pages of transcript(s) where that coding is used

Habitus Transformation (HT) : Positive motivation for education

Children want better jobs than parents	1/32
Parents invest in education	1/35
Improved lifestyle	1/37, 3/73
Influence of Asian role models	1/40, 2/47, 3/76
2 nd / 3 rd generation encourage younger	1/44f
Greater choice for pupils	1/46f
Different aspirations from parents	1/49f, 2/134, 3/18, 3/43f, 3/73
Different thinking patterns	1/6f, 1/10, 2/134, 3/19
Children allowed more freedom	1/14ff, 1/17f, 1/21f
Pupils more confident outlook	2/72
Younger generation making input to community	2/102
Working for change, changing attitudes	3/19, 3/49, 3/67
Racism reduced / skin colour unimportant	2/105f, 3/69
Making English friends	2/106f, 2/108, 2/110, 2/130, 2/115
Not playing race card	2/107
Encouragement by English teachers	2/109f, 2/114, 2/117f
Performing Arts / creative Arts	2/112ff, 2/126, 3/11f
Ed progress in context of HT	2/119f, 2/124, 2/126, 2/130, 2/132

Habitus Transformation (HT) : Gender related aspects

Parents encourage girls more than before	1/40, 2/5
Women's roles changing	2/6
Women campaign for justice	3/4

Habitus Transformation (HT) : Barriers, costs and negative effects

Effect of not achieving aspirations	2/112
Culture becoming diluted	1/46, 1/53f, 2/110, 3/73, 2/126, 3/48
Trying to move away but put back	3/44
Going outside the norm 'stamped on'	2/101, 3/4f, 3/18, 3/20
Opposition from older generation	2/138, 3/33
Lack of support for social justice	3/47
Risk of rejection by community	3/6
Bullying from 'own kind' as consequence	2/103, 2/105, 2/108, 2/112
Control by community restricts change	3/1, 3/4, 3/6, 3/15
Racial segregation in mosques	2/116, 2/133f, 3/7, 3/13

Appendix (viii)

Sample Page of survey 139 with Codings

Education results	How well do you think YP do at GCSE or A levels in [redacted]?	
	Excellent Good Not good Poor <u>Don't know</u>	
8.2	In your view, how can young people get the best possible results? <i>More for educational activities to do.</i>	T Y
8.4	What do you think is the main reason why some people do well in getting results at GCSE/A Levels but others don't? <i>Because I think it's all on the person, whoever wants to become something they will put there head down and who doesn't won't and will not care.</i>	M Y
8.5	How can education results be improved? <i>pressure from parents / teachers.</i>	Ex Y
8.6	Who do you think does better at GCSE or A Level results boys or girls? Boys <u>Girls</u> Can you think of any reason why this happens? <i>girls don't go out as much as boys do.</i>	D/S Y
18 Education results	What are your ambitions or future plans? <i>To get GCSE's, college, 6th form, job.</i>	E
19 Young people safe and Anti Social behaviour	YP are often thought to be victims as well as a cause of Anti Social Behaviour. Is this true? <u>Yes</u> No	
19.2	What do you think can be done about ASB? <i>Give and take.</i>	Q
19.3	Where in your view is ASB worst in the city? <i>Millfield</i>	M
19.4	When does ASB happen? <i>Groups together, Boredom, YP are ignored.</i>	Q
19.5	What can be done about tackling or reducing ASB? <i>Give and take.</i>	Q

Appendix (ix)

Codings for survey q 18.4 'What do you think is the main reason why some people do well in getting results at GCSE / A levels but others don't ?'

Some people...

L) Listen / pay attention / concentrate

S) Study hard / try hard / work hard / make the effort

Q) Ask for help

E) Receive encouragement / given confidence

Reasons related to....

M) Motivation / being focused / having a life plan

A) Attendance

D) Discipline / behaviour issues

H) Home background / support

PA) Parental awareness of education and involvement

Ex) Expectations of others

ET) Extra tuition / homework clubs

CC) Community – based classes

Sc) School / facilities / arrangements

CS) Class sizes

T) Teachers / teaching

TA) Support at school

P) Peer influence

I) Image / wanting to look cool

Y) Comment to be transcribed in full (exemplar of others / doesn't fit codings above / interesting comment / something I don't understand and need to ask participants)

Appendix (x) Codings for survey question 18.4 allocated by young people

18.4 What do you think is the main reason why some people do well in getting results at GCSE / A-levels but others don't?

Response 139 : 'Because I think it's all on the person, whoever wants to become something they will put there head down and who doesn't won't and will not care'

Coding by **Faiza:** L, M, S
 Haniya: E, M, D, CC
 Haris: S
 AD: M,Y

Response 148 : 'Family structure and individual needs'

Coding by **Faiza:** Q, PA, CC
 Haniya: PA, E, M, D
 Haris: H
 AD: H, Y

Response 124 : 'surroundings, parents influence, who they hang around with'

Coding by **Faiza:** Q, M, H, PA, CC
 Haniya: L, M, PA, Ex, T
 Haris: H, PA, P
 AD: H, P, Y

The interpretation of each lettered coding is as given in Appendix (ix)

Appendix (xi)

Transcribed comments from coding 'Y' for Survey q 18.4 (Only comments from Pakistani-heritage respondent included in this Appendix)

19) Strict parents, strict schools

24) General knowledge. Some people are born smart, others revise. Some people's parents don't encourage them

32) More people are aware of what value what GCSE / A levels have

33) Some actually care and don't behave so bad. Others let peer pressure & friends influence them in a negative way

38) They eat better

41) Most teachers leave and don't help people who are not doing very well

49) Some people don't get distracted or aren't as popular as others and have nothing to do but there work so they do better.

62) Colour

75) How they are socialised in the family and school

114) Due to better circumstance [sic] and family support

124) Surroundings, parents influence, who they hang around with

125) All depends on the person, if they want to do well they will work hard and if they don't they won't

139) I think it's all on the person, whoever wants to become something they will put there head down and who doesn't, won't and will not care

147) Favouritism in schools

144) Background and upbringing – stereotyped in school

148) Family structures and individual needs

153) Rubbish racist teachers

Appendix (xii)

Questions from survey used in the study

Note: All questions were designed by the young people and youth group leader

3.0 Education:

3.1 Did you enjoy your time at school?

Yes No

3.2 How would you rate your treatment by school staff?

Excellent Good Average Poor Very Poor

3.3 How would you rate your treatment by other students or your peers?

Excellent Good Average Poor Very Poor

5.0 Religion:

5.1 What is your religion, if any?

Do you practice your religion in any way, either as part of your daily/weekly life or do you worship any religious festivals?

Yes No

5.2 Do you go to a place of worship?

Yes No If Yes, how often do you go?

5.3 When was the last time you went to your place of worship?

6.0 Race:

6.1 How would you describe your ethnicity or race?

6.2 What is your main spoken language?

Community relations and views on Newminster:

11.0 How would you rate community or race relations in Newminster

(1=very poor and 10=excellent)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11.3 What would you do to improve relations between communities and faith groups in the city?

Provision for young people in the city:

16.4 Please say if you agree or disagree about whether the concerns of YP are listened to or not? Why?

16.5 What do you think can be done to make sure that YP's voices can be heard in the city?

16.6 What is the best way of communicating with young people in the city?
Are there any differences with other parts of the country?

Education results:

18.0 How well do you think YP do at GCSE or A levels in Newminster?

Excellent Good Not Good Poor Don't know

18.2 In your view, how can young people get the best possible results?

18.4 What do you think is the main reason why some people do well in getting results at GCSE/A Levels but others don't?

18.5 How can education results be improved?

18.6 Who do you think does better at GCSE or A Level results boys or girls?

Boys Girls

Can you think of any reason why this happens?

Intergenerational relations:

21.1 Do you share anything in common with your parents generation?

Yes No

21.2 If so, what?

21.3 Do you have any differnces to your parents generation?

Yes No

If so, what?

Role models:

25.1 Do you think role models are important?

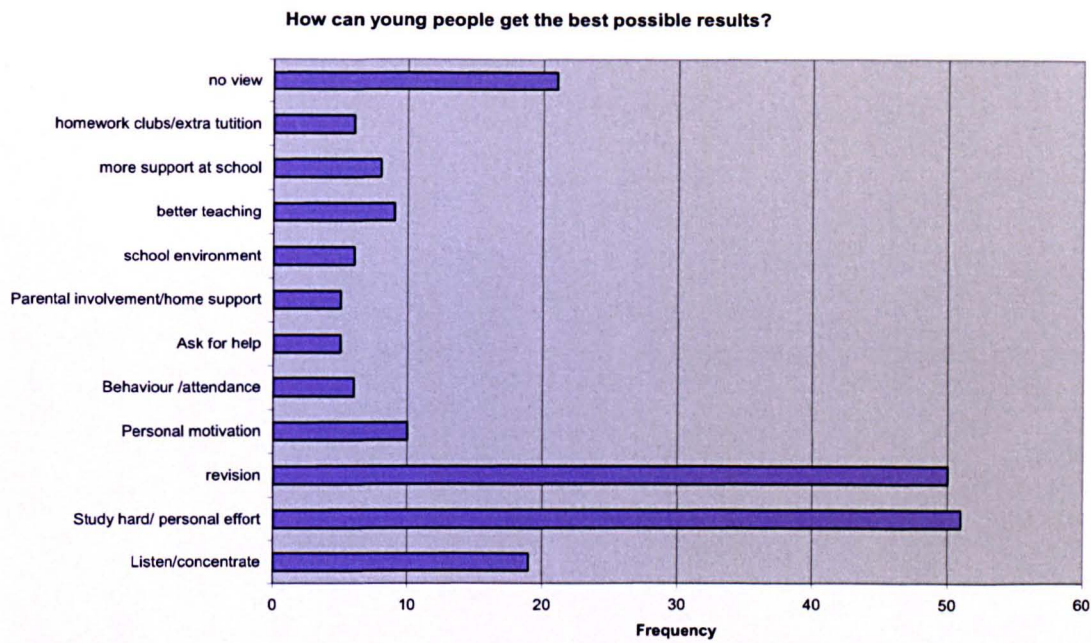
Yes No

Outside of the family, who would you say your role model is and why?

Appendix (xiii)

Survey responses to ‘How can people get the best possible results?’

How can people get the best possible results (breakdown)



How can people get the best possible results (Pakistani / British Muslim responses)

